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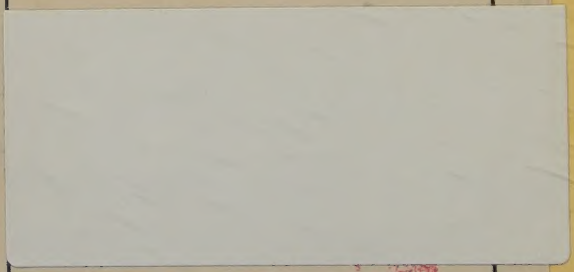

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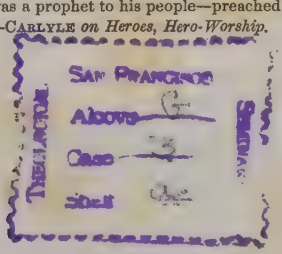
# DR. JOHNSON:

# HIS RELIGIOUS LIFE

AND

# HIS DEATH.

"As for JOHNSON, I have always considered him to be, by nature, one of our great English souls. A strong and noble man; so much left undeveloped in him to the last. * * * JOHNSON was a prophet to his people—preached a gospel to them—as all like him always do!"—CARLYLE *on Heroes, Hero-Worship.*

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# PREFACE TO THE READER.

When Doctor Johnson died, it was said of him by one who had been intimately acquainted with him nearly thirty years, "He has made a chasm, which not only nothing can fill up, but which nothing has a tendency to fill up. Johnson is dead. Let us go to the next best: there is nobody: no man can be said to put you in mind of Johnson." And does not this observation hold on to the present day? We have had a Southey, a pure writer, and most noble genius, a man too of independence and struggling in life, but not a Johnson.

Dr. Johnson had his defamers, the open ones and mean ones. One of these latter ceased not to snarl after the great man's death, and to the face of this one did the Rev. Dr. Parr boldly say, "Ay, now that the old lion is dead, every ass thinks he may kick at him." But the longer the lion dead, so much the larger has that lion become. And where shall we now find the ass?

Politically speaking, it must be expected that there should be many who will not agree with Dr. Johnson. But these hold him dear in memory. Leigh Hunt, in one of his interesting and entertaining works,* when excusing Johnson's pompous manner, says: "At all events, one is willing to think the best of what was accompanied by so much excellence. Affectation it was not; for nobody despised pretension of any kind more than he did. Johnson was a sort of born bishop in his way, with high judgments and cathedral notions lording it in his mind, and *ex cathedrâ* he accordingly spoke." This "born bishop" is a felicitous term. "He advanced," says Leigh Hunt again, "by the power of his conversation, the strictness of his veracity, and the respect he exacted toward his presence, what may be called the personal dignity of literature. The consequence has been not exactly what he expected, but certainly what the great interests of knowledge require, and Johnson has assisted men with whom he little thought of co-operating, *in stating the claims of* Truth *and* Beneficence *above all others!*" These latter words may be claimed as the text of some discourse in this book.

Dr. Johnson truly had no affectation; no sham eccentricities about him. He was one of Carlyle's "noble silent men, scattered here and there: silently

* "The Town," by Leigh Hunt: 2 vols. Smith and Elder.

thinking; silently working; whom no morning newspaper makes mention of." Yes, Johnson with all his conversation, was not of the noisy inanity of the world; no words of little meaning, no actions of little worth were found in him. "Old Samuel Johnson," exclaims Carlyle,* "the greatest soul in England in his day, was not ambitious. 'Corsica Boswell' flaunted at public shows with printed ribbons round his hat; but the great Old Samuel staid at home. The world-wide soul wrapt up in its thoughts, in its sorrows—what could paradings and ribbons in the hat do for it?" Let us not, however, decry Boswell, for his very failings have been of valuable service to men who have the greatest relish for literature. He esteemed Johnson, and Johnson esteemed him; and that should be enough for us: whether it be true or not that Dr. Johnson said to Mr. Long, "Sir, if I were to lose Boswell, it would be a limb amputated."

Two men of note might be seen contemporaneously in the streets of London. There was Wesley, in his band and cassock, with his long hair, white and bright as silver, his face and manner indicating that all his minutes were numbered, and that not one was to be lost. Often irascible in temper, his countenance was calm; and he was remarkable for the cleanness and neatness of his appearance. And there was

* "Heroes and Hero Worship:" p. 351.

Johnson, issuing forth from the silent retreat of Bolt-court, bodily and bulkily, into the human tide of Fleet-street: one time swaying against a huge porter, who wisely contented himself with gazing in wonderment after his rolling antagonist; at another, lifting polluted misery out of the mire, and from the very jaws of starvation and death; and then seated on his throne, the chair of the Literary Club—he, the athletic and uncouth, in the old brown coat, and shabbier wig. Contrasts, indeed, these men in person, and, in great degree, in sentiment: both worthy of admiration and love; but the one of a deeper and more enduring fame than the other.

With Dr. Johnson we have to do: *with his religious life, and his death.* No apology can be due to the public for another book on Dr. Johnson; but every indulgence must be asked for the inadequacy of the performance. It may yet be improved: some things omitted, some things added. In reading the life of Johnson, the author could not fail to perceive, in common with others, the exquisite vein of religion and its humanities that runs through the whole: but then, this vein is not as that of marble in the rough rock, but is so surrounded on all sides with literary matter of the highest interest, that its continuous line, though it can not be hid, yet may not have the prominence it deserves. To place the religion and beneficence of Dr. Johnson more by themselves, though mingled,

more or less in all his thoughts and works, and to enable others to discern them at a glance, this has been the aim, the desire, of the author.

And what a religious life it was! What evidence do his written *Prayers* give (from the 18th of September, 1738, to the 18th of September, 1781), of the devout state of his mind; and during this time, as well as before and afterward, how did his works prove the depth, the charity, the sincerity of his religion. Mark those prayers in your privacy (for his deeds and conversation are more alluded to in this book); mark the beautiful reverence, perspicuity, and simplicity of their language—no flowery expressions, or pomp of diction used, such as abound in the "Rambler:" every thing proceeds from the heart—humble, contrite, penitent, and full of gratitude! See in his *Meditations* his devout spirit kept alive, and the image of his Redeemer never out of sight. During all this period of life we find his charities (in the Scripture sense) in constant, silent vigor: we mark his independence of mind, never a beggar, and writing bravely to Lord Chesterfield: we acknowledge his worth, even Mr. Thrale, a man of business and immense wealth, selecting him as his executor: nothing equivocal in his actions, nothing mean or paltry, but intent "aperto vivere voto," without the least ostentation of virtue. Not an atom of stoical pride, not an atom of selfishness or self-righteousness

in his composition. The *incorrupta fides* without the boasted *mens conscia recti* assumed by your heathen philosophers and moralists. Such was Dr. Johnson in life, and in him the union of high intellectual faculties with a firm belief in Christianity has conferred, under the Divine blessing, a signal benefit on mankind: and while he loved and venerated the Church of England, it was in St. Cyprian's sense of the universal Church, who wrote, "neither can any man be united to the Church, who is separated from the Gospel." *

And Dr. Johnson, after many avowed fears, was calm and resigned in his death. To have a fear of death is natural in man, as the great portrayer of human nature saith, †

> "The weariest and most loathed worldly life,
> That age, ache, penury, and imprisonment
> Can lay on nature, is a paradise
> To what we fear of death."

But still this natural propensity can be overcome, and the influence of those invisible realities which create and sustain all Christian rectitude, will enable one, who is blessed by that Comforter which is promised to be with the Church alway, to exclaim in humblest dependence upon Christ, "O death, where is thy

* See Bishop Jewell's "Apology of the Church of England," p. 143, edit. 1685.

† "Measure for Measure:" Act iii. Sc. 1.

sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" The fear of God, and not of man, seems ever to have been before the eyes of Dr. Johnson, accompanied by a deep sense of his own utter unworthiness to obtain salvation, save through the merits of our blessed Saviour; and it appears to have been the effect of deeply religious feeling, that made him averse even to speak on the subject of death. To some other men another manner is allowed. But to personal fear he was always an entire stranger; and the aged hero, ever intrepid amid all his infirmities, when informed by his physician that he could not recover, "Then," said he, "I will take no more physic, not even my opiates; for I have prayed that I may render up my soul to God unclouded." Undauntedly did he meet death; prepared in body and soul for its approach. Reader, it is well that it should be thus with any man! Amen.

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# DR. JOHNSON.

## HIS LITERARY AND RELIGIOUS LIFE.

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### CHAPTER I.

"We continued our reading of Johnson's Lives of the Poets. How often at midnight, as he listened with avidity, he apologized to me for keeping me from my rest! but, still delighted with our reading, he would say, 'Well, you may go on a little more.'"—TROTTER's *Memoirs of Fox.*

THE same warm spirit of approval with which Charles James Fox,* in his last illness, stamped the literary talent of Johnson, has animated a very recent writer to speak of his kindly affections. "There was in Dr. Johnson," says the Rev. James S. M. Anderson, † "an earnest and practical benevolence, which no man has surpassed." It shall be a main purpose of these pages to verify this saying from evidence; for herein we view one of the fairest fruits of religion. Little or no allusion shall be made to his political sympa-

* Though Fox was shy of speaking much in the presence of Johnson, and Johnson avoided converse with him and others, thinking at one time that he almost deserved hanging for his political opinions, yet we find Boswell asking Johnson whether it was true that he had said lately, "I am for the king against Fox: but I am for Fox against Pitt." JOHNSON:—"Yes, sir: the king is my master: but I do not know Pitt: and Fox is my friend." Johnson added, that Fox was a most extraordinary man; while we are told that Fox "plainly showed much partiality for Johnson." Fox was a member of, and sometimes presided at the Literary Club; but Boswell records little of the conversations that took place.

† In an admirable Lecture on Dr. Johnson, in "Addresses on Miscellaneous Subjects," by the Rev. J. S. M. Anderson, Chaplain in Ordinary to the Queen, &c. Rivingtons. 1849.

thies or prejudices; for, while Johnson was a Tory, his contemporary Addison was a Whig; and may we not, in great measure, regret that such men should ever become involved in the troubling speculations of politics? Edmund Burke and George Canning! you would have gone down to posterity with fuller and nobler remembrance, had you more loved the leisure for that intellectual toil which leads to profounder and more lasting achievement in the universal fields of literature and science.

Croker observes, that the very name of Johnson's biographer is likely to be "as far spread and as lasting as the English language;" what then must be the knowledge of mankind concerning Johnson himself, who, in that very language which is so probably destined to become one of the most extended on the earth, has written such lessons of wisdom, spoken aphorisms worthy the noblest ages of philosophy, and delivered, in common conversation, moral and religious principles, which can never be out of human remembrance until an absolute empire of Antichrist overspreads the world? For, although the name of Boswell will be transmitted to all future time, yet, "You have made them all talk Johnson," was the remark made to him; and his own observation was becoming, "Yes, I may add, I have *Johnsonized* the land; and I trust they will not only talk, but think *Johnson!*" Largeness of mind, and liberality of heart, will inevitably be the lot of all those who have power granted them to think as Johnson thought.

It was well said by a Scotchman,* "When you see him first, you are struck with awful reverence; then you admire him; and then you love him cordially." It may be doubted whether many have got beyond the bounds of reverence and admiration: it is on closest acquaintance that you learn to love him. "To enjoy Dr. Johnson perfectly," wrote Hannah More, "one must have him to one's self;" and thus, when we can no longer see him bodily present, we must view him, not so much in the enjoyment of his "clubbable" disposition, or in the more magnificent walks of literature, or in the presence of kings, and lords, and hosts of friends; but

* Donald Macleod, a Highland chief.

in the unobtrusive deed of charity, in letters of consolation to the afflicted, in counsel given to the friendless, substantial help to the struggling, hospitality to the obscure, and in his own thoughts when almost alone. Mr. Steevens makes this honorable mention of him, and he knew his private life well: "Could the many bounties he studiously concealed, the many acts of humanity he performed in private, be displayed with equal circumstantiality, his defects would be so far lost in the blaze of his virtues, that the latter only would be regarded." We must always suppose that a large amount of the beneficence of charitable individuals is hidden from public notice.

The world at the present time, equally as in Johnson's own days, may too much regard him as *the* giant in literature, just as we gaze in wonder and awe on the huge mountain in the landscape, or on the robust and rugged oak that mocks with its stalwart form the tenderer trees that bend in more beauty around; and very probably, in like manner as the sight of the vaster works of nature appall and pain the mind accustomed to the smoother scenes of creation, and as the elegant flower enraptures us more than the gnarled and proud hero of the forest, so there are those who would rather like to gaze on our human leviathan at a distance: rather listen to his wise and ponderous thoughts in the more familiar form of anecdote; or rather forsake him entirely for the more brilliant and evanescent sayings of inferior men. All these, however, look upon him with mental awe—they know there is an Alp in the realms of literature as well as of nature; but they as readily decline an acquaintance with the one, as they would rather put off to a never-arriving season their journey to the other. And this same idea probably pervades them in regard to the religion, equally as to the literature of the man; all is so vast, so solemn, so bluntly sincere, sometimes telling more of severity than sweetness, savoring of any apostolic mind, rather than that of the beloved disciple who leaned on the heavenly bosom: there is such knowledge of the human heart in its worth and in its pretensions, and such bold, outspoken opinion, that they feel afraid to approach too nearly to one who may frown on their deficiencies, rather

than encourage, with serener brow and smoother tongue, their unduly accelerated advances; although they well know that, in reality, no instance of true humility or merit would ever escape his earnest and faithful regard. We may not wish these to "talk Johnson" unless they can be brought to "think Johnson;" nor may we care to see the whole world, so long as the pure pattern of an Addison exists, thoroughly Johnsonized; yet we may say, that in few ages of the world is a goodly leaven of the great and honest heart of Johnson more needed than in the present time, when mankind are in danger of heeding the allurements of frivolous and brilliant entertainment in preference to sound and rightly severe instruction, and when mere sensual cant, in literary or religious garb, takes the place of the sublime and the sincere.

This observation, be it remembered, is to be only partially applied. We must not decry the present age which, perhaps, in a general point of view, is the best to live in of any period that has passed in the world. Johnson would not dispraise his own times. When Lord Monboddo said that our ancestors were better than we, "No, no, my lord," exclaimed Johnson, "we are as strong as they, and a great deal wiser." In talking of writers and preachers, he said, now "every body composes pretty well: there are no such inharmonious periods as there were a hundred a years ago;" and he only found fault, wrongly, as we may now think, with the innovation that put a stop to the processions accompanying a criminal to Tyburn. And although he writes, "The mental disease of the present generation is impatience of study, contempt of the great masters of ancient wisdom, and a disposition to rely wholly upon unassisted genius and natural sagacity;"* and declared that "if no use is made of the labors of past ages, the world must remain always in the infancy of knowledge;" yet he said, "I am always angry when I hear ancient times praised at the expense of modern times. There is now a great deal more learning in the world than there was formerly; for it is universally diffused. You have, perhaps, no man who knows so much Greek and Latin as Bentley: no man who knows so much mathematics as

* Rambler, No. 154. See also No. 50.

Newton: but you have many more men who know Greek and Latin, and who know mathematics." How still more strikingly true is this of our own times! Boswell says that Johnson was never querulous, never prone to inveigh against the present times, as is so common when superficial minds are on the fret. Yet if personal superiority over our fellows might give us right to talk of the mediocrity of the age, he fully possessed that right, both as regards intellect and moral disposition. In him the light of genius, united with the light of religion, is shown to be capable of producing a pure and steady splendor, far surpassing the bright flashes occasionally emitted by the glare of genius when combined with impurities of heart, and followed generally by flickering and eccentric motions. A modern anecdote may serve to illustrate my meaning. Sergeant Lens having opened a difficult case in a most temperate and lucid manner before Judge Dallas, Dallas, at the conclusion of the opening, sent on a strip of paper the two following lines to him:

> "*Lens*, like an argand lamp, shines clear and bright,
> Consumes the smoke, and gives us *only* light."

Sometimes Johnson loved argument merely for the sake of testing the ground on which others gave out their sentences: and then often the outburst of his mind, like Foote's conversation, resembled a great furnace, whose heat was so intense, that it obliged you to stand at a distance from it. "When I was a boy," he said, "I used always to choose the wrong side of a debate, because most ingenious things, that is, most new things, could be said upon it:" but we understand the object of his sometimes, when a man, following this rule. He felt this to be also an inducement to others; for of skeptics, and false reasoners, he remarked, "Truth will not afford sufficient food for their vanity, so they have betaken themselves to error." All objections to, as well as proof for, any important matter, were reflected on in his mind, and thus he writes, "Every thing which Hume has advanced against Christianity had passed through my mind long before he wrote."

Small actions mark his sagacity in supposing where meanness might be found, and show his contempt of it. Thus he

bought his little parcels of tea and sugar "at a stately shop," because it would not be worth their while to take a petty advantage: yet he was not allured by appearances and titles, for, having observed the paltry vanity of many people in quoting the authority of dukes and lords, as having been in their company, he said, he went to the other extreme, and would not mention his authority when he should have done it, *had it not been that of a duke or a lord.*

"Nor wealth nor titles make Aspasia's bliss."*

Another kind of nobility he best recognized. The name of a person having been mentioned to him, he said, "Let me hear no more of him. That is the fellow who made the index to my Ramblers, and set down the name of Milton thus —Milton, *Mr.* John." And though ignorance more than insult perpetrated this mistake, yet Johnson's lines will occur to us as further proof of his feeling—

"Fate never wounds more deep the generous heart,
Than when a blockhead's insult points the dart."

He could not bear pretension or presumption in any man. He was told of an impudent fellow who affected to rail at all established systems: "There is nothing surprising in this," calmly observed Johnson, "he wants to make himself conspicuous. He would tumble in a pig-sty so long as you looked at him and called to him to come out. But let him alone, never mind him, and he'll soon give it over."

This is prudent advice, and came worthily from him, who "in all things and every where, spoke out in plain English, from a soul wherein jesuitism could find no harbor, and with the front and tone not of a diplomatist but of a man."† There were no jewels of paste about his head; he wore no borrowed crown: his was gold without glitter, and he enjoyed a kinghood of his own. Moreover, we shall find, as we proceed, that "few men on record have had a more merciful, tenderly affectionate nature than old Samuel"‡—ay, when young or when older, when poor or when richer, when learning or when learned: he was always the same, loving and beloved.

* Irene. † Carlyle's Miscellanies, iv. 96. ‡ Ibid. 103.

## CHAPTER II.

### EARLY RELIGIOUS LIFE.

Dr. Johnson seems to have been blessed with strong impressions of religion at a very early time of life: and these impressions certainly biased the tone of his religious feeling —one of fear rather than of love—during the periods of manhood and old age. He himself said, that he remembered distinctly having had the first notice of heaven, "a place to which good people went," and hell, "a place to which bad people went," communicated to him by his mother, when a little child, in bed with her. When he was as yet in petticoats, she put the Book of Common Prayer into his hands, and he learned the collect for the day with wonderful quickness. But she did not always train his young mind with judicious care. "Sunday," he says, "was a heavy day to me when I was a boy. My mother confined me on that day, and made me read the 'Whole Duty of Man,' from a great part of which I could derive no satisfaction;" and he gives an instance in proof of this feeling. Soon he fell into an indifference about religion—talked flippantly about it—found great reluctance to enter a church—and not until he resided in college at Oxford, and took up "Law's Serious Call to a Holy Life," did he recover from this supineness in the most important business of life. How often do we find our joyous Christian Sunday invested with notions of gloom, through false and injudicious teaching, even in the minds of adult scholars, and its present use, as well as its type of the future, entirely perverted! In after life, we find him holding rational and benevolent ideas respecting the proper observance of the Christian Sabbath.

Here we may be permitted to observe the usefulness of parental education. How many children, before escaping from the nursery, have learned lessons of virtue from a

mother or a father,* that have never been forgotten—never been driven out of the mind and heart by the largest additions of subsequent knowledge! Of all maternal patterns, the mother of St. Augustine ranks the first. From parental instruction, such minds as those of Wotton, Hooker, Herbert, Sanderson, &c., &c., derived inestimable benefit. The mother of Adam Clarke, like Johnson's mother, was a stern, yet useful instructor in the ways of religion: for with what horror young Adam heard the croak of the raven after she had referred him, on some case of disobedience, to that verse of Scripture, which told him that the ravens would pick out the eyes of the mocking child! (Prov. xxx. 17); and, he says, "my mother's reproofs and terrors never left me." It was the mother of Byron who led him among the grander scenes of nature, and formed within him that gifted portion of his mind which imagined noble poetry. And thus inanimate things affect us also. The "church bells of our home," the "fragrance of our old, paternal fields," dwell in our remembrance; and influence us to good, to the latest hour of our lives.† A case to the contrary, such as Wordsworth's "Michael," may occur; but who is there that can say that his earliest lessons have not continued to be the best, and most freshly remembered, during the hours of reflection and repose? Things that we reason upon are not those which have greatest hold upon our actions; the simple offices of veneration, obedience, and thankfulness, are those that form the happy and dutiful life.

Dr. Johnson ever thought tenderly of his mother. "You frighted me," he writes to Miss Porter, "with your black wafers, for I had forgot you were in mourning, and was afraid your letter had brought me *ill news of my mother, whose death is one of the few calamities on which I think*

* The Rev. Richard Cecil writes: "I was much indebted to my MOTHER for her truly wise and judicious conduct toward me, when I first turned from my vanity and sin." And of his other parent: "In all my companions—NO FATHER! In all my conversations, none like him! In all my doubts—no oracle like him! In all my fears and anxieties—no refuge like his generosity! I feel HIS LOSS, though surrounded with the prodigality of liberality and kindness."

† Hugh James Rose.

*with terror*." His letters to his beloved mother, just previous to her decease, are the most affecting-specimens of filial love that could possibly be written: and his thankfulness to all those who waited on her is expressed in the most touching terms of gratitude and regard. After her decease, we may be sure that his thoughts were identical with those addressed some years previously to his friend (Mr. Elphinston) on the loss of a mother, where he says, "I can not forbear to mention, that neither reason nor revelation denies you to hope that you may increase her happiness by obeying her precepts; and that she may, in her present state, look with pleasure upon every act of virtue to which her instructions or example have contributed." He holds this to be a pleasing, though not important opinion, to those who are acting under the immediate eye of God, which, of course, is the supreme idea that should influence our conduct: and who can tell in what degree this hope of maternal cognizance may not have guided her son, not only in that great work (his Dictionary) of which it is recorded, "that he has quoted no author whose writings had a tendency to hurt sound religion and morality," but also in his numerous other writings wherein the talent displayed is not their chiefest excellence.

Well is it when we have religious parents, and are enabled to obey them: but not less blessed is he who can conduct himself without frowardness to the less virtuous. That is a beautiful passage in one of the letters of Pliny the younger, wherein he speaks of Pompeius Quinctianus in these admirable terms: "How open was his countenance—how modest his conversation—how equally did he temper gravity with gayety—how fond was he of learning—how judicious his sentiments—*how dutiful to a father of a very different character*—and how happily did he reconcile filial piety to inflexible virtue; continuing a good son, without forfeiting the title of a good man!" Who can peruse this remarkable instance of heathen virtue, and not, in many situations of the moral and religious life, exercise the duties of forbearance and benevolence?

For such considerate humanity is required by Christianity.

"Always in command of himself," it is said of the Christian,* "in order to preserve his heart pure and without reproach, he feels no hatred toward sinners: he regards them as suffering patients, whose body oppresses and governs the soul: he considers them as insane mortals, whose erring minds suggest to them a false good as their aim, or select a false means for attaining a praiseworthy and useful object. Instead of hating, he pities them; and he labors to enlighten them in diminishing the evils of error and ignorance. . . . . He desires to effect good, but not with the view of a recompense; for if he desired and demanded any reward, his virtue would no longer remain virtue, but would be transformed into selfishness and mercenary calculation. He loves virtue, because it is divine; he aspires to perfection, because his Heavenly Father is perfect."

For a season, in early youth, Dr. Johnson seems to have declined in religion; and this declension continued until his mind was impressed by reading "Law's Serious Call to a Holy Life," at Oxford; which book he took up, expecting to find it dull, after the manner of many religious books, and perhaps to laugh at it. "But," he says, "I found Law quite an overmatch for me: and this was the first occasion of my thinking in earnest of religion, after I became capable of rational inquiry." The amiable Bishop Sandford has said, that no one aids the devil's cause more than he who preaches a dull sermon; and surely a dull book on religious matters is an equal evil. Law's book, though far from being light or entertaining, is written in an interesting manner, for there are certain characters described, and many of his sayings and comparisons are of great force, and such as are likely to strike the attention, and leave an impression. From his exhortations to charity and benevolence, we may well conjecture that Dr. Johnson drew many a lesson which we find reduced to practice throughout his life.†

* Hours of Meditation. By Heinrich Zschokke, p. 83. The object of this author, as he states in his preface, is, "*to propagate true Christianity by reanimating the zeal for internal and domestic devotion.*"

† The Rev. Dr. Maxwell tells us, that Dr. Johnson "much commended 'Law's Serious Call,' which, he said, was the finest piece of

During even a portion of his career at Oxford, that place so awful in religious aspect and solemnity, and the college discipline of which he afterward highly extolled, he appears not to have been sufficiently under the mild restraint of religion, for we are told that he was often seen lounging at the college gate, keeping others from their studies, if not inciting them to rebellion against the collegiate authorities. And when Dr. Adams, the Principal of Pembroke College, told Boswell, what a happy fellow Johnson was when there, and how loved and caressed by all: "Oh, sir," replied Dr. Johnson, on being told this, "I was mad and violent. It was bitterness, which they mistook for frolic. I was miserably poor, and I thought to fight my way by my literature and my wit; so I disregarded all power and all authority." In the year previous to his death (1783), in a conversation with Mr. Seward, he says, "I myself was for some years totally regardless of religion. It had dropped out of my mind. It was at an early part of my life. Sickness brought it back, and I hope I have never lost it since." *Brought it back;* that is, a thing was recovered which for a time had been lost. The principles of religion instilled by his mother, at an early age, were revived; for he adds, "A man who has never had religion before, no more grows religious when he is sick, than a man who has never learned figures can count when he has need of calculation." That there is general truth in this observation, any clergyman, accustomed to parochial visiting, will readily perceive. We speak of a man's being brought to the knowledge of religion by sudden affliction or accident, when we should rather say, that the recollection of it is renewed in his mind. The religion is there, as far as knowledge is concerned, but it is dormant; and, in reality, the particular illness or affliction only stirs it up, and calls out more effectively, that which has been long, and perhaps gradually more and more, almost unawares, received

hortatory theology in any language." This book is published by the "Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge," and enjoys a most extensive circulation. In the chapters on Humility and Universal Love, with its general encouragement of Devoutness of Mind, we can see much that would attract the attention of Dr. Johnson.

into the heart. Thus, in nine cases out of ten, a man in calamity knows well on whom to call, he knows where pardon is to be found, he knows Who is the way, the truth, and the life; and he quickly shows that he has not lived in a Christian land in vain, not come to God's church in vain, not discoursed with Christain people in vain; but that there is religious knowledge within him, which only requires some earnest impulse to summon it forth into the light of day. The beautiful and breathing statue is in the rugged rock, it only requires the hand of the sculptor to remove the surrounding rubbish, and expose it to the delighted eye of man.

That Johnson should have become an inciter to rebellion at Oxford, and taken pleasure "in vexing the tutors and fellows," is the more remarkable, because he was usually obedient to parental authority. He has mentioned, that he could not in general accuse himself of undutifulness to his parents. "Once, indeed," he said, "I was disobedient: I refused to attend my father to Uttoxeter market. Pride was the source of that refusal, and the remembrance of it was painful. A few years ago (but a few before his death), I desired to atone for this fault. I went to Uttoxeter in very bad weather, and stood for a considerable time bareheaded in the rain, on the spot where my father's stall used to stand. In contrition I stood, and hope the penance was expiatory." Whatever we may think of this mode of punishment, a mode recommended by the law of the land more than by religion, we still find him mindful of former remissness, and doubtless, had any person been living to whom he owed a debt of duty, or from whom he should have sought forgiveness, that living person would have received satisfaction from him in a manner at once faultless and sincere.

During the college period of his life, we may assert that his religious views were substantially reformed. And at this time also his thirst for literature was great, and the energy of his mind, in its struggles with poverty and hereditary disease, most remarkable. The story of the shoes may be passed by, as not thoroughly authenticated;* but the vehement

* Carlyle seems to credit this story; and if it be true, how worthy his comment! "One remembers always," he says, "that story of

yearning of his soul, incompatible with the poorness of his purse, may be gathered from the following soliloquy he was heard to utter in his *strong, emphatic voice :* "Well, I have a mind to see what is done in other places of learning. I'll go and visit the universities abroad. I'll go to France and Italy. I'll go to Padua. And I'll mind my business. For an *Athenian* blockhead is the worst of all blockheads." With a desire to visit all universities, when he could scarcely maintain a residence in one, he must, like Goldsmith, have set out to traverse the continent without a shilling. His father was soon in a state of insolvency, and he himself, in fact, was compelled to leave Oxford without a degree, ere long to become an usher in a provincial school, and next to be the subject of the following laudable advertisement : "At Edial, near Lichfield, in Staffordshire, young gentlemen are boarded and taught the Latin and Greek languages, by Samuel Johnson"—an advertisement which secured one accomplished and faithful friend, David Garrick, but which, as Boswell observes, had it "appeared after the publication of his London, or his Rambler, or his Dictionary, how would it have burst upon the world!" As it was, we must look upon "the largest soul in all England, and provision made for it of fourpence halfpenny a-day."*

the shoes at Oxford : the rough, seamy-faced, raw-boned college servitor, stalking about in winter season, with his shoes worn out : how the charitable Gentleman Commoner secretly places a new pair at his door; and the raw-boned servitor, lifting them, looking at them near, with his dim eyes, with what thoughts—pitches them out of the window ! Wet feet, mud, frost, hunger, or what you will; but not beggary : we can not stand beggary : Rude, stubborn self-help here : a whole mass of squalor, rudeness, confused misery and want, yet of nobleness and manfulness withal. It is a type of the man's life, this pitching away of the shoes. An original man; not a second-hand, borrowing or begging man. Let us stand on our own basis at any rate ! On such shoes as we ourselves can get. On frost and mud, if you will, but honestly on that." (Heroes and Hero-Worship, 2d Edit. p. 28.) When Thomson, the poet, was robbed in the streets of London of his "magazine of credentials" to persons of consequence, as the prime note of his poverty, Johnson remarks; "His first want was a pair of shoes."—Life of Thomson, in Lives of the Poets.

* Carlyle.

Henceforward, we never find him swerving from his religious principles, beyond an occasional ebullition of temper, or the yielding to a stray temptation; and, as he himself said most truly, *a fallible being will fail somewhere.* Perhaps the most trying time to Johnson, as regards the purity of his moral conduct, must have been that which passed during his first acquaintance with Savage, the poet. Savage was a man who had seen much of life in its every degree, and who possessed a vigorous mind and captivating power of conversation, at the same time that he was notoriously profligate and ungrateful, as appears from the whole tenor of his life, and his peculiar behavior toward Sir Richard Steele, and the Earl of Tyrconnel. With this man, Johnson, through extreme poverty, was compelled to wander whole nights in the street, neither of them being able to pay for a night's lodging; and, at this time, so shabby was Johnson's clothing, that he did not choose to appear in public on some occasions.* It does not, however, appear, although Boswell suggests suspicion, that he gave way to the licentious temptations of Savage; but, if he did yield for a time, his natural and religious rectitude of conduct was soon regained. And who does not perceive the power of his religion, which could preserve him comparatively unscathed amid the scenes presented to his view, and which, ere long, rescued him completely from liability to fall into any dangers they may have offered; while, on the other hand, poor Savage, with great natural abilities, void of all religious guidance, never rose superior to sensual indulgence, but to the very last continued notorious for every depravity and meanness that could characterize the vicious career of an evil and ungoverned heart. Dr. Johnson, in the greatness of his disposition, and ever mindful of the misery of Savage, and the peculiar aggravations that tormented his very soul, afterward bestowed as much diligence in writing his memoir, as in constructing that of more celebrated poets; and after truly relating the scenes of wretchedness and crime with which Savage was conversant, thus

* It was at the time that he published the Life of Savage, we have the story of the plate of victuals being sent to him behind the screen, on account of the shabbiness of his dress. See Croker's last edit. p. 49.

charitably concludes: "They are no proper judges of his conduct, who have slumbered away their time on the down of plenty; nor will any wise man presume to say, 'Had I been in Savage's condition, I should have lived or written better than Savage;'" but as a warning to all men of high attainments, he reminds such, "Nothing will supply the want of prudence; and that negligence and irregularity, long continued, will make knowledge useless, wit ridiculous, and genius contemptible."

Savage was not an infidel, though he lived the life of a man careless of futurity, and in one of his last letters makes mention of thankfulness to the Almighty. But Johnson was a believer, with all the integrity and faithfulness that becomes one; and, from the influence which Christian precept held over his own mind, he could not imagine that goodness could really exist but in union with Christian faith. "No honest man could be a Deist," he said, "for no man could be so after a fair examination of the proofs of Christianity;" and when Hume was talked of, he added, that Hume had mentioned to a clergyman, that he had never read the New Testament with attention. Hume, with all his sneering and sarcastic propensity, was, we may assert, an honest man; and his well-known saying, that if he could believe in Christianity, he should stop every man in the street to tell him of his danger, goes far to invest him with the character of integrity; and it is a fact that can not be denied, that we do find men capable of the purest moral conduct apart from any belief in any particular religion. Although man, on the whole, is radically wanting in goodness, yet we all enter into negotiations with him, as though he were perfectly moral and trustworthy, and we are surprised and angered when he practices fraud or treachery toward us; and yet, if he were wholly given up to the dominion of an evil spirit, what could we expect otherwise in all his transactions, when we had no evidence of the existence of the renewed heart within him? Still, if a man be utterly irreligious, that is, be an atheist, and disbeliever of a future life, there can be no hold on that man—he can only have the fear of society, as leavened by Christianity before his eyes; when, on the contrary, what a

superior motive has he for rectitude of life, who firmly believes that God's punishment will reach even where men can not detect,* that every word and action is noted by an Almighty eye at all times and in all places, and that the destiny of eternal happiness or wretchedness depends upon the trial afforded to him in this present life. There are cases of hypocrisy among us, but the instances of religious sincerity, and its paramount influence over the whole conduct of life, we may readily believe to be innumerable.

In somewhat the same category with Hume, Johnson placed Foote, the facetious actor, if he were really an infidel. "If he be an infidel!" he said, in answer to Boswell's question, "he is an infidel, as a dog is an infidel; that is to say, he has never thought upon the subject." With Rousseau's character he had no patience; "Rousseau, sir, is a very bad man. I would sooner sign a sentence for his transportation, than that of any felon who has gone from the Old Bailey these many years." On Voltaire, and on all infidel or immoral writers, he would have passed the same judgment.

When speaking of infidelity, we usually mean those persons who disbelieve the evidences of the Christian religion. Doubtless, a Deist may be a very good man;† and such

* Mallet, who was a great free-thinker, used on all occasions to advance his sentiments, until, we are told, the inferior domestics in his house became as able disputants as the heads of the family. The servant who waited at table being thoroughly convinced that for any of his misdeeds he should have no account to render hereafter, was resolved to profit by the doctrine, and made off with the plate, and many things of value. He was overtaken, and brought before his master and some select friends. At first, the man was sullen, and would answer no questions put to him; but, being urged to give a reason for his infamous behavior, he resolutely said, "Sir, I have heard you so often talk of the impossibility of a future state, and that after death there was no reward for virtue, or punishment for vice, that I was tempted to commit the robbery." "Well, but you rascal," replied Mallet, "had you no fear of the gallows?" "Sir," said the fellow, looking sternly at his master, "what is that to you, if I had a mind to venture that! You had removed my greatest terrors; why should I fear the lesser?"—*Memoirs of Garrick*, vol. ii. p. 60.

† Because a Deist may be a good man, let it not be thought that any encouragement is held out to a profession of deism. There is a wide difference between the case of a heathen who has never heard of Christ, and a man in a Christian country who willfully rejects evidences

were some of the philosophers of ancient times, and such were many of the Jews, who could not discern the person or times of the CHRIST in the book that guided their moral and humane life. But whether an utter infidel can exist, one who beholds all the orderly arrangement of the celestial and terrestrial systems, and yet can discern no power more than human, is a problem indeed. Hannah More makes mention of the only atheist (poor Ayrey) she ever knew. "He was an honest, good-natured man (this supports our theory), which certainly," she observes, "he should not have been on his principles." Yet he was not without *a* belief. "He was a fatalist, and if he snuffed the candle, or stirred the fire, or took snuff, *he solemnly protested* he was compelled to do it." What made him believe in this necessity of things? must be our question. She adds, "He always confessed he was a coward, and had a natural fear of pain and death, though he knew he should be as if he never had been." This was, indeed, in him, cowardly and irrational, and quite opposed in principle to the fear of death which a Christian may entertain; and which Dr. Johnson, himself, did with reason hold. However, all was well with Johnson at the last. "God's purpose shall stand," said the devout Charles Simeon; "but our liability to fall and perish is precisely the same as ever it was: our security, as far as it relates to him, consists in *faith*, and as far as it relates to ourselves, it consists in *fear*." * Johnson and Simeon were diverse in character, but in this feeling they agreed.

internal and external, the disbelief of which is sometimes attributable (like Blanco White's) to defective mental constitution, but in the vast majority of cases to vitiated moral feeling, and a dislike of the humbling doctrines of the Cross. An article in No. CLXXXII. of the *Edinburgh Review*, entitled "Reason and Faith: their Claims and Conflicts," may be perused with much advantage by the Skeptic or Rationalist.

* Memoirs of Rev. Charles Simeon, p. 395. 3d edition.

## CHAPTER III.

### HIS RELIGION.

After this negative proof of Johnson's religion, let us turn with more pleasure to the positive. "Christianity," he wrote, "is the highest perfection of humanity; and as no man is good, but as he wishes the good of others, no man can be good in the highest degree, who wishes not to others the largest measures of the greatest good! Thus, though the Deist may be good, and zealously wish the good of others, yet the Christian, who believes himself to be in possession of the greatest good, should be the earnest distributor of it to others: in short, how can a man be good, who keeps back from other men that which he feels to be the highest perfection of humanity?" This sentiment, which had peculiar reference to the translation of the Bible into the Gaelic language, we may well suppose capable of an universal application, and hence it binds every believer in Christianity to the duty of propagating, at home and abroad, the doctrines and tenets of that most holy religion. And before a man can effectually do this, he must himself be well versed in the doctrine, and exercised in the practice of religion; and, perhaps, few men could render a better answer for the faith that is in them than Dr. Johnson. He, like Addison, had examined the matter deeply, and made up his mind with resolution; and Addison tells us, that when once we have canvassed a subject in all it bearings, and come to a just conclusion, let not objections afterward drive us from that conclusion, but let us, if we have not our arguments ready to our mind at the time, recur to that period when we did prove all things, and resolved to hold fast that which we then, after our best endeavor, accounted to be the truth. When Johnson was told that Goldsmith (and where is an instance of a man's conduct being in greater contrast with his writings, the one so care-

less, the other so careful?) had said—"As I take my shoes from the shoemaker, and my coat from the tailor, so I take my religion from the priest;" he answered, "Sir, he knows nothing, he has made up his mind about nothing." Johnson was the last man, notwithstanding his reverence for the clerical character, and for the teaching of the church, to take his religion from the priest: no, his great mind must investigate the matter, he must be convinced of the truth of Christianity, and then he would bow his head, with feelings of awe and satisfaction, before the Christian instructor, who, in accordance with Goldsmith's admiration in a more deliberate season, would not seek to maintain his sway

"By doctrines fashion'd to the varying hour."

That his faith and practice were, in all essential respects, thoroughly Christian, it may seem impertinent to prove before the minds of those who are well acquainted with the opinions and character of Dr. Johnson; but alas, some there are who, through ignorance, are ready to depreciate both the tenets and the motives of the man, and to look upon him, as others have imagined him to be in literature and in society, as a sort of bear and bigot, whose failings were so great, that his virtues need not be regarded. This is the fanaticism of inconsiderate and ignorant persons; and little do men consider the hurt that they cause to religion, when they would represent Shakspeare as an unbeliever, or Johnson as not strictly Christian; that is, not orthodox according to their self-assumed notions of orthodoxy. The old hackney-coachmen of London were exposed to a penalty for not having a check-string, but no law, until some time after, was made to oblige them to take hold of such check-string. Alas! in weightier matters we have check-strings provided, but we act as the hackney-coachmen.

And what was his profession in the article of faith? He firmly believed that the death of Jesus Christ was a sacrifice for the sins of mankind. At one time, Boswell writes,* "I spoke to him of the satisfaction of Christ. He said his notion was, that it did not atone for the sins of the world: but,

* In the Tour to the Hebrides.

by satisfying the divine justice, by showing that no less than the Son of God suffered for sin, it showed to men the heinousness of it, and therefore rendered it unnecessary for divine vengeance to be exercised against sinners," &c. There seems to be some confusion or contradiction here, for surely, if divine vengeance be satisfied, and God be reconciled to man by the death of Christ, then is that death a satisfaction and atonement for sin. Again, Boswell writes: "I said, the great article of Christianity is the revelation of immortality. Johnson admitted it was." Here we must remark that Boswell describes himself as sounding Johnson upon particular subjects, but he gives us not Johnson's answers in Johnson's own words Therefore Croker, the indefatigable editor of the Life of John son warns us, not to trust too much to Boswell's colloquial phrases on such vital points, which appear to be sanctioned by the admission of Johnson; and Boswell himself says on the former opinion quoted above, "What Dr. Johnson now delivered was but a temporary opinion, for he *afterward* was fully convinced of the propitiatory sacrifice, as I shall show at large in my future work." And in his future work (the life of Johnson) we find Dr. Johnson deliberately stating his opinions on original sin, and on the atonement. Let these short extracts suffice, for nothing is given contradictory to them. "The great sacrifice for the sins of mankind was offered at the death of the Messiah, who is called in Scripture 'the lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world.'" Again he says—"The peculiar doctrine of Christianity is that of an universal sacrifice and perpetual propitiation. Other prophets only proclaimed the will and the threatenings of God: Christ satisfied his justice." In one of his last prayers, he beseeches the Almighty—"Make the death of thy Son Jesus effectual to my redemption;" and in other prayers he alludes to the *satisfaction* of Christ's death. It is true, that Christ brought life and immortality to light through the gospel (2 Tim. i. 10); that is, has made perfectly certain what was before doubtful to the heathen, and not clear to the Israelites, although a few such as Job and Cicero, might have held a firm persuasion of a future life; yet this is not the leading idea of Christianity, but rather the great fact revealed by the gospel is the ATONE-

MENT,* this the grand gospel tidings which should be preached without reserve to all people. *Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the* CHRIST *is born of God;* this was the article of belief offered to the Jew—namely, to believe that Jesus whom the apostles preached was really the Anointed One of God, was truly the antitype of the prophecies and sacrifices; that the high-priest entered the holy of holies once a year with blood as a type of the atonement; and that now "we have a great High-Priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God." (Hebrews iv. 14.) The man who held this belief was born of God, for from God only did these prophecies, and the ordinance of sacrifices, come: and he who had the vail removed from his eyes, so as to discern the great secondary intent of these institutions, to him the truth was made known by God that Jesus was the Christ—"whom *God hath set forth to be a* PROPITIATION:" "*the* PROPITIATION *for our sins.*" (Rom. iii. 25. 1 John ii. 2.)

Seeing that Dr. Johnson so fully believed in the doctrine of the Atonement, we may pass over his orthodox belief in the Trinity, and in the renewal of the heart of man by the Holy Spirit—doctrines which his meditations and prayers show to have been held by him—and proceed to the practical behavior of his Christian life. And first, we should, in estimating the sincerity of a man's religious profession, ask, What is the business he pursues, and how does he conduct himself in his common dealings with his fellow-men? Let a man be a rich banker or merchant, or be a plowman or shoe-black, the question is of vital importance, for the honesty and fidelity inculcated by our religion should pervade and guide every action and word of our daily negotiations with our fel-

* Some divines would feel inclined to consider the INCARNATION as the leading idea of Christianity—for this is "the mystery of godliness." It is difficult to give prominence to any chief doctrine, all and each are so important, so interwoven. The ATONEMENT is the doctrine we most immediately cling to, for *the blood of* JESUS CHRIST *cleanseth us from all sin;* yet it is hardly more prominent than the RESURRECTION OR INTERCESSION, except as preliminary and prerequisite; in short it is the foundation, but not the whole building. For instruction on the first-mentioned doctrine, I would refer my readers to the work of the Rev Henry Wilberforce, M. A., entitled, *The Doctrine of the Incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ.* Murray.

low-creatures. Better is it to have little profession and great performance; as the son who told his father that he would not go and labor in the field, and yet went, was better than he who said he would go, and went not: thus in vain do richer men attend at church or tabernacle, speak in the cause of religion and inscribe their names on subscription lists, unless in the ordinary duties of life they hate to defraud the fatherless, the widow, or any man, woman, or child whatever. Vain is the talking of plowman or artisan, if when the master's eye is not on them they turn to idleness, or squander time or money which should be devoted to the support of their families, and to the aid of virtuous principles. Now with Dr. Johnson literature was a business, and in its pursuit he could accumulate or reject what Scripture calls "good works," for a man is to be judged according to the deeds done in the body, and the deeds thus done are most manifold in the daily occupation of man, whatever it may be. It is very pleasing, then, to observe, that in Dr. Johnson's business of life he was often holy, and always singularly harmless and undefiled. Of the literature with which he has for ever enriched the British store, where can the single page be pointed out that would tend in the slightest degree to allure the mind from religion? On the contrary, how many of his writings are replete with religious counsel, delivered in a tone of exhortation as earnest as it is argumentative! To mention but a few, let us read in the "Rambler," of which Boswell says, "In no writings whatever can be found more *bark and steel for the mind*," No. 7, on the Love of Retirement; 17, on the Frequent Contemplation of Death; 50, on a Virtuous Old Age; 54, a Deathbed, &c.; 110, on Repentance; 155, 175, and 185: and in the "Idler," Nos. 4, 14, 41 (this letter should be read with 54 in the "Rambler" as an antidote to its gloom), 43, 51, 52, 58, 89, and 96—what a warning in this last for the youth of our land! let us attentively read these papers, and we can not fail to imbibe feelings of moral fortitude, patience, self-denial, and preparation for the immortal life. And yet to writings more decidedly religious than these we can point, even to his Prayers and Meditations, and to Sermons which bear ample internal evidence of having issued from his pen.

Even his Dictionary was conceived under the restraint and guidance of religion: and we may suppose that most of his literary labors, like that of the "Rambler," were consecrated by concise and hearty prayer; and of most of them he could assert, as he said of the "Lives of the Poets," "Written in such a manner as may tend to the promotion of piety." No man more abhorred those whose literary exertions were spent in pandering to the vicious inclinations of the age, and in putting bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter; and he gives this wholesome monition: "Vice, for vice is necessary to be shown, should always disgust: nor should the graces of gayety or the dignity of courage be so united with it, as to reconcile it to the mind."* Again† he speaks of those licentious writers who have not only forsaken the paths of virtue, but attempted to lure others after them: "They have smoothed the road of perdition, covered with flowers the thorns of guilt, and taught temptation sweeter notes, softer blandishments and stronger allurements:" and he concludes, "But, surely, none can think without horror on that man's condition, who has been more wicked in proportion as he had more means of excelling in virtue, and used the light imparted from heaven only to embellish folly, and shed lustre upon crimes." Well would it be, if the writers of this nineteenth century of Christianity, those who "set fashion on the side of wickedness," who recommend every evil action by associating it with qualities that serve to engage the affections and attract the mind, and who are unsettling the better sentiments of thousands upon thousands of the middle and poorer classes of society, and luring them into irrecoverable unhappiness—well would it be if these would take such sentences of the wise, and great, and enduring heroes of literature seriously to heart, and henceforth seek only to advance the moral welfare of the masses of society, whose approbation of virtue receives strength and vigor "from the books they read, the conversation they hear, the current application of epithets, the general turn of language,"‡ &c., and toward whom any labors adverse to morality, and hence to happiness and tranquillity of mind, are positive cruelty.

* Rambler, No. 4. † Ibid. No. 77. ‡ Paley on the Moral Sense

## CHAPTER IV.

### HIS RELIGION.

Dr. Johnson's habit of devout prayer must have exercised a most beneficial influence, not only on his literary efforts, but also on the whole tenor of his life; indeed, but for the energy of his religious devotion and practice, his very existence would, perhaps, have been wrecked on the gloomy element of his natural constitution. Every good gift cometh from God, must be sought of God; and we are graciously assured that, from the humble prayer of the meek and reverent petitioner, the Almighty will not turn away. On every new undertaking, on receiving the Sacrament and hearing of sermons, on parting with friends, and in all assaults of temptation or approaches of affliction, we find him using and recommending the blessing of prayer. When he accompanied Boswell to Harwich, on the journey of the latter to Holland, "We went and looked at the church," is Boswell's record; "and having gone into it, and walked up to the altar, Johnson, *whose piety was constant and fervent*, sent me to my knees, saying, "Now that you are going to leave your native country, recommend yourself to the protection of your Creator and Redeemer:'" and with what a sterling letter was this advice followed up, wherein he writes, "You will, perhaps, wish to ask, what study I would recommend. I shall not speak of theology, because it ought not to be considered as a question, whether you shall endeavor to know the will of God."* But more striking are his short memorandums of prayer with his poor black servant. "Sunday, 17th. Prayed with Francis, *which I now do commonly*, and explained to him the Lord's Prayer." His letters to this servant, whom he always addressed as "Dear Barber," (and in his address to no male being did Johnson exceed this epithet),

* See Croker's latest edition, p. 162.

are characteristic of the *affectionateness* of his nature, as well as of its humility; for, as the Persian peasant, who, when elevated from his hovel to the palace of his sovereign, kept with care his original wooden shoes, so was Johnson ever mindful of his first humble station, and never domineered over the poorest or most unfortunate. This is one of his letters to Francis Barber, whom at the age of twenty-five years he had put to school; and the whole of it must be given to show the tender courtesy, as well as feeling of affection, mingled with due caution for him, in which he addressed his poor negro; in, fact, he could not have treated a lord with more respectful regard:

"DEAR FRANCIS—I am at last sat down to write to you, and should very much blame myself for having neglected you so long, if I did not impute that, and many other failings, to want of health. I hope not to be so long silent again. I am very well satisfied with your progress, if you can really perform the exercises which you are set; and I hope Mr. Ellis does not suffer you to impose on him, or on yourself. Make my compliments to Mr. Ellis, and to Mrs. Clapp, and Mr. Smith.

"Let me know what English books you read for your entertainment. You can never be wise unless you love reading. Do not imagine that I shall forget or forsake you; for if, when I examine you, I find that you have not lost your time, you shall want no encouragement from yours, affectionately,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

We find that Johnson never would allow of swearing, or profane expressions, in his presence. This was agreeable to the profound sensations of awe with which he ever contemplated the Supreme Being, and which have been remarked in the distinguished Robert Boyle, and other men of great talent and genius. On one occasion Boswell repeated to him a smart epigrammatic song of his own composition, which had been set to music by Mr. Dibdin, on the procuration of Garrick; but, because the words, "Oh, by my

soul !"* occurred in it, Johnson said, "It is very well, sir, but you should not swear." Upon which Boswell wisely altered those words to "Alas, alas!" Sir John Hawkins informs us, that when a person of some celebrity was using many oaths in his conversation, Johnson said : "Sir, all this swearing will do nothing for our story, I beg you will not swear." The narrator continued to swear; Johnson said, "I must again entreat you not to swear." He swore again: Johnson quitted the room. On another occasion, at Dr. Taylor's, at Ashbourne, he was very angry with a gentleman farmer who swore in his discourse, and reprimanded him in the way best adapted to silence a vulgar man. Davies, who wrote the Life of Garrick, reminded him of Mr. Murphy, a celebrated actor, having paid him the highest compliment that ever was paid to a layman, *by asking his pardon for repeating some oaths in the course of telling a story.* Boswell was once suggesting, that probably more gentleness of manner might have added benefit to his conversations; "No, sir," said Dr. Johnson, "I have done more good as I am. Obscenity and impiety have always been repressed in my company !" Boswell added, with characteristic withdrawal of an opinion, "True, sir; and that is more than can be said of every bishop. Greater liberties have been taken in the presence of a bishop, though a very good man, from his being milder, and, therefore, not commanding such awe." There was an authority about Dr. Johnson's speech, and a readiness always to extinguish a flippant or impertinent speaker, that must often have stopped the utterance of a sentence, and consigned many a conception to prudent silence. We are told also, that he disapproved of introducing Scripture phrases into secular discourse. Boswell thinks this a question of some difficulty; and that, on some occasions, a scriptural expression, like a highly classical phrase, may be

* An excellent little book on the Ten Commandments, by the Ven. Archdeacon Vickers (Rivingtons), may be consulted on this matter. Speaking of the Third Commandment, he says, "It forbids the sin of common cursing and swearing: and this, whether the sacred name of the Lord God himself is made use of, or any other set of words; as, 'By my life,' 'Upon my soul,' or any such expressions." See pages 47 and 49.

used to advantage. May we not ask, whether much will not depend on the company, and on the nature of the conversation, in which it is used? Generally speaking, it would be improper, and, as regards any witty or light allusion, utterly reprehensible. The Scriptures are from heaven; their pages are those of holy inspiration; and the Word of God, as the name of God, should only be uttered by mortal man with the feelings and in the tone of sacred reverence. They are different from the *works* of God, which we treat of in common parlance, inasmuch as every thing around and about us is His work; and not to speak commonly of these, would be not to speak at all.

In the "Microcosm," a well-known Etonian publication, issued when Canning was an Eton boy, there is an article written by Canning himself, in which, as Hannah More observes, the practice of common swearing "is treated with a vein of ridicule, not unworthy of Addison in his happiest mood." She is surprised to find such "elegant ridicule, and well-supported ironical pleasantry" in a youth, but she evidently knew not who the youth was; and herein we have a striking instance of "the boy the father of the man." But amid all Canning's pleasant ridicule, undertaken on the principle,

"Ridiculum acri
Fortius ac melius magnas plerumque secat res,"

this more serious reflection occurs:* "It has been observed," he writes, "by some ancient philosopher, or poet, or moralist, (no matter which), that nothing could be more pernicious to mankind *than the fulfilling of their own wishes.* And, in truth, I am inclined to be of this opinion; for many a friend of mine, many a fellow-citizen of this lesser world, would, had his own heedless imprecations on himself taken effect, long ere this have groaned under the complication of almost every calamity capable of entering a human imagination. And with regard to the world at large, were this to be the case, I doubt whether there would be at the present time a leg, or limb of any kind, whole in his Majesty's service." He then goes on to tell us of a lieutenant who still continued to

* Vol. i. No. 11, p. 14.

execrate his eyes, although he had lost one of them. The worst sin that attaches to swearing is, that we undeservedly make the Almighty a wholesale condemner of mankind, whenever any displeasure against a fellow-mortal, or ourselves, arises in our own minds; and this, when on every Sabbath-day, in the service of the Church of England, we are exhorted to "speak good of His name." We may well imagine how repugnant swearing would be, in this light, to the ideas Dr. Johnson entertained of the beneficence of the Deity.

Happily the speech of man is altered since Canning's day; and not even troopers now swear without reproach or rebuke. It will not be, we may safely prophesy, the universal language contemplated by Bishop Wilkins; neither need another Hibernian divine arise to tell us, *more patriæ*, that "the little children that could neither speak nor walk, run about the streets blaspheming." No, the danger is quite in the other extreme.

And though a distinction should ever be made between the comparative demerits of the two extremes—between the crime of the blasphemer and the error of him whose reverence of God's name restrains him from a lawful oath; yet to this latter his error should be pointed out, and he should be told that his misconstruction of scriptural texts may be as glaring as it is conscientious. Thus it will be better to *educate* for the right, rather than to *legislate* for the wrong view. If legislation is to be guided by the private judgment of persons on texts of Scripture, the question may well be asked, Where shall we stop? It is well known that a sect has arisen which refused to participate in any kind of labor, because our Lord said, *Labor not for the meat that perisheth;* and others might refuse to enter a court of law at all, because St. Paul has said, *Now there is utterly a fault among you, because ye go to law one with another.* And yet the words, *Swear not at all* (Matt. v. 34), no more mean that no oath is to be taken, than the words, *Labor not*, mean that no labor is to be done. Bishop Sanderson and Archbishop Newcome show that the Apostle's words have nothing to do with judicial swearing, but are directed solely against rash

and angry oaths, which the Jews were in the habit of uttering in common conversation. And this must be the case, or the Apostle Paul would contradict his Lord; for it is written in Hebrews vi. 16, *An oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife.* And St. Paul frequently called God to witness the truth of his assertions, as may be seen in Romans i. 9, and also ix. 1; 2 Cor. i. 18 and 23; Gal. i. 20; 1 Thess. ii. 5. In Deut. vi. 13, we read, *Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God, and serve him, and swear by his name;* and in Heb. vi. 13, St. Paul says, *When God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he sware by himself.* Let us say, that oaths should be few, and always solemnly administered, or they will not be reverenced; but we have not a tittle of Scripture that would serve to warrant their utter abolition.

Many other points of importance in his religious character might be advanced, which show that religion held a paramount and constant sway over that conscience which the Almighty has placed in the breast of all men, to be regulated and guided by the enlightenment of his holy Word. Thus his self-examination was prominent—a duty from which men shrink as regards the soul, in the same degree that so many are fearful to be informed by the skillful physician of the extent of growing disease in the body. We find by many expressions in letters, and in conversation, that he often dared to look into himself, and retired from the review of life with those humbled feelings which must mortify any tendency or temptation to self-glorification in any true Christian. How careful was he as to forming rash resolutions of conduct, knowing the weakness that is in man! How he censured a book written by Lord Kames, in which it was asserted that virtue was natural to man! "After consulting our own hearts," he said, "and *with all the helps we have*, we find how few of us are virtuous;" and he added, that all mankind knew Lord Kames's saying not to be true. How he lamented that "all serious and religious conversation was banished from the society of men;" how he ever thought that we should be "making the concerns of eternity the governing principle of our lives;" and "he reproved me," says the

Rev. Dr. Maxwell, "for saying grace without mention of the name of our Lord Jesus Christ:" a name which Croker thinks too awful to be introduced amid the levities of such a time; but, if we may introduce the name of the Creator, surely we may that of the Redeemer also. How careful was he to avoid ostentation! and once, when he was asked the reason of laying aside a watch which had the words Νὺξ ἔρχεται engraved on the dial-plate, he said, "It might do very well upon a clock which a man keeps *in his closet;* but to have it upon his watch, which he carries about with him and which is *often looked at by others*, might be censured as ostentatious." He probably cared not for what others thought, but felt conscious in himself that such was ostentation, and a snare that might gradually lead to a betrayal of humility. And with this feeling he never wished to appear singular, but in all common and harmless things to act in conformity with the world around him. "No person," he said, "goes under-dressed till he thinks *himself of consequence enough* to forbear carrying the badge of his rank upon his back." How true is this—what pride may lurk in the old hat, or ordinary coat—how many persons who have become rich, pride themselves on not being fine! In answer to arguments urged by Quakers, &c., he exclaimed, "Oh, let us not be found, when our Master calls us, ripping the lace off our waistcoats, but the spirit of contention from our souls and tongues! Let us all conform in outward customs, which are of no consequence, to the manners of those among whom we live, *and despise such paltry distinctions.* Alas!" he continued, "a man who can not get to heaven in a green coat, will not find his way thither the sooner in a gray one!" This is all good common sense—and those who wish to see the matter concerning gay apparel more fully discussed will do well to read the controversy between pious Hervey and good John Wesley, in which the argument *pro* and *con* is well nigh exhausted. But in his charities and humanities of every kind, we find him seeking to avoid the observation of the world, and literally doing his alms in secret.

No man could be more convinced of the protection of God,

and the certainty of the future life. To Miss Porter he writes. "We have one Protector, who can never be lost but by our own fault." Speaking of the difficulty of attaining to literary fame: "Ah, sir, that should make a man think of securing happiness in another world, which all who try sincerely for it may obtain. In comparison of that, how little are all other things!" To Boswell he writes, after having been at Lichfield, where he witnessed what he calls "a collection of misery," one friend lame, another paralytic, another blind, and another deaf: "Such is life. Let us try to pass it well, whatever it be, for *there is surely something beyond it.*" To Mrs. Thrale, on the loss of her child, how mindful of our frailness, how consoling to the mother! "He is gone, and we are going! . . . Remember, first, that your child is happy; and then, that he is safe, not only from the ills of this world, but from those more formidable dangers *which extend their mischief to eternity.* You have brought into the world a rational being: have seen him happy during the little life that has been granted to him; and can have no doubt but that his happiness is now." What mother will not, under similar mournful circumstances, feel her sorrow chastened by words like these, from such a heart of truth?

The above instances but show imperfectly the power and constancy of Johnson's religion. We must behold it in his charity and humanity, the fruits of his faith: we must view it as it pervaded his entire life. In every good thing he grows better by acquaintance: and though rough at times, yet, as Goldsmith said, he had nothing of the bear but the skin. When he was told that Sir James Macdonald, who had never seen him, had a great respect for him, somewhat mingled with terror—"Sir," he said, "if he were to be acquainted with me, it might lessen both." Wise and great as Dr. Johnson was in this world, yet was he humble and earnest in his longing after immortality, and could have said in the language of one of our best divines,* though not the most celebrated, "I have but this one business to do, to insure this dear soul of mine in its voyage to eternity: let

* Lucas.

who will gain the reputation of a wise man by a clearer foresight and thriftier management of affairs, by an unwearied attendance and insinuating applications, I shall think myself *wise* enough, if I can but be saved, and *great* enough if I enjoy but the smiles of Heaven."

And pleasing is it to know that this resolution was followed out to the last. We have the testimony of an excellent individual, to which more may be added in its proper place, who writes, "No action of his life became him like the leaving of it. His death makes a kind of era in literature: piety and goodness will not easily find a more able defender; and it is delightful to see him set, as it were, his dying seal to the professions of his life, and the truth of Christianity."*

Gratifying also is it to find that the conduct of Pope in the hours of death was such as became the author of the ecstatic speech addressed by the Dying Christian to his Soul. "Pope," says Dr. Johnson,† "expressed undoubting confidence of a future state." Being asked by his friend Mr. Hooke, a Papist, whether he would not die like his father and mother, and whether a priest should not be called, he answered, "I do not think it essential, but it will be very right: and I thank you for putting me in mind of it." Mr. Hooke, on this occasion, told Dr. Warburton, "that the priest whom he had provided to do the last office to the dying man, came out from him, penetrated to the last degree with the state of mind in which he found his penitent, *resigned and wrapt up in the love of God and man.*" Rightly, as devoutly, may we here exclaim with the poet,

"You see the man; you see his hold on heaven!"

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* Memoirs of Hannah More, vol. i. p. 394.

† Life of William Bowyer, by John Nicholls, p. 394.

## CHAPTER V.

### HIS HUMANITY.

We speak of a man's religion, and of his humanity or benevolence, when in fact these are inseperable: for, although men by nature are enabled to perform offices of kindness, yet it is religion that cultivates and increases the kindnesses of human nature, and religion without the practice of benevolence would be a nonenity. It is so much our interest to be kind one to another, that very much of our benevolence may be leavened with selfish feelings; still there are innumerable acts of charity which can spring only from the energy of faith acting on our hearts—faith in God, and Christ, and the Holy Spirit, and a world to come; not that the hope of reward hereafter solely stimulates the mind, for this would be looking forward to a larger reward than man can give (albeit such a motive is sanctioned in God's word, for we are *to rejoice and leap for joy, that great is our reward in heaven*),* but mainly because we know that it is pleasing to God that we should relieve the poor, comfort the afflicted, speak kindly to and encourage the wretched. The mournful, the meek, the merciful, the pure, the peaceable, the poor in spirit, are to be the favorites of man, inasmuch as they are pronounced to be the favorites of God: and let men profess whatever zeal they may in the cause of religion, and be ever so orthodox, or ever so warm in peculiar views adopted by themselves, the saying holds good that *the worst of all heretics is the uncharitable man.*

Having become acquainted with something of the depth, and fervor, and thorough sincerity, of Dr. Johnson's religion, we are led to expect many acts of humanity emanating from him whom the pious Hannah More describes as one "whose faith is strong, whose morals are irreproachable!" Yet, so

* Luke vi. 23.

filled is Boswell's Life of him with literary achievement and anecdote, so fraught with wise observations on common and worldly things, that the scarlet thread of his true beneficences may, in some degree, escape that notice and regard of the hurried reader, to which they are entitled. Still it does exist in no mean quantity and quality, proving with what trueheartedness he said on one occasion, "Getting money is not all a man's business; to cultivate kindness is a valuable part of the business of life."

At the very outset of this consideration of Dr. Johnson's life in its humane aspect, it must be candidly stated that at times he was exceedingly rough, and even coarse in his manner; and yet seldom was he so without subsequent repentance and remorse. That he did good, as much as lay in his power, to many persons, is very apparent; and it will not be found that he ever designedly did an injury to any one; so that we may exclaim with Burke, when he spoke in reference to the alleged roughness of Johnson's manner, "It is well if, when a man comes to die, he has nothing heavier upon his conscience than having been a little rough in conversation."

Great minds have often great failings as well as great virtues, and although we can not call the occasional roughness of Johnson's manner a great failing, yet we can see that the ponderous power of his thought, when provoked to vehemence, naturally led him to seek at once to annihilate an antagonist, especially if he was one in whom presumption or flippancy of remark was observable. "How very false is the notion," says Boswell, "that has gone the round of the world, of the rough, and passionate, and harsh manners of this great and good man!" And although Boswell allows that sometimes he displayed impetuosity of temper, too easily excited by the folly and absurdity of others, and perhaps at times unwarrantably shown, yet he tells us, that during by far the greater portion of his time, he was civil, obliging, polite, insomuch that many persons who were long acquainted with him,*

* The ingenious Mr. Mickle thus wrote of Dr. Johnson, in a letter to Boswell:

"I was upwards of twelve years acquainted with him, was frequently

never received a harsh word from him, or heard him express himself with heat or violence in any way. That he was an admirer of gentleness in society may be learned from an anecdote related of him, to the effect that when Mr. Vesey was proposed as a member of the Literary Club, Mr. Burke began by saying that he was a man of gentle manners. "Sir," said Johnson, "you need say no more. When you have said a man of gentle manners, you have said enough." And that he had no great faith in the efficacy of severe manners in the great object of ameliorating the disposition of mankind, may be gathered from his observation on Lord Mansfield's saying, "My lords, severity is not the way to govern either boys or men." "Nay," remarked Johnson, "it is the way to *govern* them; I know not whether it be the way to *mend* them." There is a just soundness in this latter remark, more than in the former: the one is that of an advocate in a particular cause, the other that of a philosopher in the calmness of truth.

We must always bear in mind that Johnson inherited a constitutional malady, which at times must needs create morbid and melancholy sensations in his mind, and render it impatient under provocation, and especially sensitive in any case of a worrying or disturbing nature.* We know how painfully aware he was of his state, how he prayed and struggled against this calamity, and heroically

in his company, always talked with ease to him, and can truly say, that I never received from him one rough word."

For some people, however, he had words rough indeed, and many of these persons deserved them.

Hannah More writes (1785)—"Boswell tells me he is printing *anecdotes* of Johnson, not his *life*, but, as he has the vanity to call it, his *pyramid*. I besought his tenderness for our virtuous and most revered departed friend, and begged he would mitigate some of his asperities. He said, roughly, 'He would not cut off his claws, nor make a tiger a cat, to please any body.'"—*Memoirs of Hannah More*, vol. i. p. 403.

* Carlyle says of Dr. Johnson, "Nature, in return for his nobleness, had said to him, Live in an element of diseased sorrow. Nay, perhaps the sorrow and the nobleness were intimately, and even inseparably, connected with each other."—*Heroes and Hero-Worship*, p. 280.

wrote of himself, "Though it is wise to be serious, it is useless and foolish, and perhaps sinful, to be gloomy." Who that loves the character of Cowper also, will not bewail in his very heart the misfortune of this kind that perplexed the temperament of that good man; and of which he speaks so strongly and so tenderly, from his first attack of depression when commencing studies at the Temple, even to that time when he writes, "Thus have I spent twenty years, but thus I shall not spend twenty years more!" No, though he was "hunted by spiritual hounds in the night season," and though he wrote "under the pressure of sadness not to be described;" yet his religion bore him through difficulties and distresses which, in its absence, would have overwhelmed him.

How salutary must have been his going to church for the first time after his recovery from his first attack, when his heart was full of love to all the congregation, especially to such as seemed serious and attentive. Fortunate indeed for his mental health was his attachment to the church, and his friendship with some of her pious ministers. "Cowper," says his biographer, "was warmly attached to the religion of the Established Church, in which he had been trained up, and which, like his friend Mr. Newton, he calmly and deliberately preferred to any other."* This choice must have served rather to cheer his mind than to excite it, and to soothe his heart rather than inflame it: for "all those alleviations of sorrow," as Dr. Johnson observes of his case, "those delightful anticipations of heavenly rest, those healing consolations to a wounded spirit, of which he was permitted to taste, at the period when uninterrupted reason resumed its sway, were unequivocally to be ascribed to the operation of those very principles and views of religion," that is, Calvinistic, as moderated by the tone of the church, which he had adopted. Cowper, sitting at the feet of the Rev. John Newton, or in familiar counsel with Madan, and Johnson kneeling in awe at the altar of St. Clement Danes, were both indebted (how largely!) to the healing influences of our

* Life of William Cowper, by Thomas Taylor, 3d edition, p. 402.

most holy and most consoling religion. Of either of them we might aptly say,

> "Thou shalt have joy in sadness soon;
> The pure, calm hope be thine,
> Which brightens, like the eastern moon,
> As day's wild lights decline."

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## INSTANCES OF HIS HUMANITY.

It now becomes a peculiar pleasure to record some instances, scattered throughout his valuable career, of Dr. Johnson's kindnesses shown toward his fellow-creatures, in order that we may determine whether, in good George Herbert's words, he did

> "Find out men's wants and will,
> And meet them there. All worldly joys go less
> To the one joy of doing kindnesses."

A characteristic incident is related of him so early as the year 1732, before he was twenty-three years of age, and from the previous opinion of his friends concerning him, we may be sure that it was by no means his first kind action. It appears that he engaged to translate a book from the French into English, but he soon became indolent, and the work at a stand-still. His friend, Mr. Hector, we are told, "knew that a motive of humanity would be the most prevailing argument with his friend;" so he forthwith went to Johnson, and communicated to him that the printer could have no other engagement until this one was finished, and that he was very poor, and his family in want. Johnson, upon hearing this, in spite of the ailment of his body, immediately set vigorously to work. "He lay in bed," we read, "with the book, which was a quarto, before him, and dictated, while Hector wrote." It must be mentioned, that at this time Johnson himself was in a state of great poverty, and he obtained only five guineas on the completion of the book.

There are few men who will not consider the history and fate of Collins the poet very affecting; and affecting also is

Johnson's tenderness on his behalf. "Poor dear Collins!" he writes, "would a letter give him any pleasure? I have a mind to write!" To another he writes, in less than a month's time, "Poor dear Collins! Let me know whether you think it would give him pleasure that I should write to him. I have often been near his state, and therefore have it in great commiseration." Some months after, he writes again, "What becomes of poor dear Collins? I *wrote him a letter* which he never answered. I suppose writing is very troublesome to him. That man is no common loss!" The repetition of the above endearing epithets shows how poor Collins's state was fixed in Johnson's mind. He died in the course of this year. Collins was evidently a man of most refined genius and sensitive temper, but irresolute and indolent to the last degree; ever planning, yet never achieving. What he did perform, makes us deeply deplore the existence of these failings, whereby much of a charming style of pensiveness has been lost to the admirers of that kind of disposition. Johnson's account of his life, though brief, is beautifully written; and how piercing is the thought, in a letter to Joseph Warton, after reflecting on the folly of exulting in any intellectual powers, when the condition of poor Collins is beheld, "This busy and forcible mind is now under the government of those who lately would not have been able to comprehend the least and most narrow of its designs!" As in his Life of Savage, so in that of Collins, the charitable mind of Johnson is ever prominent; and it was after the lapse of many years, that he mentions him as one, "with whom I once delighted to converse, and whom I yet remember with tenderness." Nearly twenty years after Collins's death, we find him commissioning Boswell to purchase for him "Collins's Poems," just four years before he commenced the "Lives of the Poets," which were completed in the year 1781; so it may be supposed that he wished to have the poems for his own satisfaction, independently of any idea of writing a memoir of the poet; especially since he orders them with another little book in no kind of connection with the English poets. Our living poet, Wordsworth, has not been unmindful of the sorrows of a brother poet; and how

tender is his "Remembrance of Collins," vain though the prayer be!

> "Now let us, as we float along,
> For *him* suspend the dashing oar;
> And pray that never child of song
> May know that poet's sorrows more."

Tenderness begets tenderness: we feel kindly disposed toward the man whom we know to be kind to others. A remarkable instance of this feeling occurs in Johnson's sentiments toward Thomson, the poet. It was expected that he would, in his "Lives of the Poets," have treated Thomson's private conduct with severity. But no; one letter of the poet, one proof of fraternal affection disarmed him. Great credit is due to Boswell, who may have been in part anxious to exalt the character of his countryman, but quite as great credit is due to Dr. Johnson, in so readily casting away a prejudice, and allowing one trait of generous and affectionate conduct to blot out from his biography a multitude of sins. Boswell inclosed a copy of Thomson's last letter to his sister, and writes to Dr. Johnson, "From this late interview with his sister, I think much more favorably of him, as I hope you will." Dr. Johnson inserts the letter in his "Life of Thomson," and a most tender and generous letter it is—though nothing more than what should ever pass between brother and sister.

Great was Johnson's kindness toward Goldsmith, and Goldsmith certainly appreciated it, although each would occasionally say rather severe things of the other: and it is said that Johnson had more kindness for Goldsmith than Goldsmith for him. The latter had, unfortunately, a great desire to shine in conversation—too often unconscious, dissimilar to Addison, of his want of ability in this faculty—and thus not only attracted to himself some pertinent saying of Johnson, but also endured much self-mortification. Once when he thought he was talking much to the admiration of a mixed company, a German, who had perceived Dr. Johnson about to speak, suddenly touched him, saying, "Stay, stay, Toctor Shonson is going to say something:" and a similar circumstance also occurred at a party at Sir Joshua Reynolds's. Dr. Johnson said truly of him, "No man was more foolish

when he had not a pen in his hand, or more wise when he had:" and on another occasion, "Goldsmith was a man who, whatever he wrote, did it better than any other man could do." Goldsmith himself sometimes seemed aware of his deficiency, although he would always persist in talking on matters he knew nothing of whatever; for Johnson says, "What Goldsmith comically says of himself is very true—he always gets the better when he argues alone; meaning, that he is master of his subject in his study, and can write well upon it; but, when he comes into company, grows confused, and unable to talk." It is pleasant, however, after all their little bickerings, to know that Johnson had a most tender regard for Goldsmith. The kindness of Johnson in selling a MS. for him, and thus giving him the means of paying his rent, is well known. He spoke well of, and personally admired all his written performances, excepting the Life of Parnell, which he thought poor because the materials were scanty; and after his death, he speaks of "poor, dear Dr. Goldsmith," and writes, "Let not his frailties be remembered: he was a very great man." And still more pleasing is it to find Goldsmith, the vanquished of Johnson, saying, "Johnson, to be sure, has a roughness in his manner: but no man alive has a more tender heart." Dr. Johnson wrote his epitaph in Latin, a circumstance which led to the celebrated round robin: but why does not Goldsmith appear in his "Lives of the Poets?"

A noble trait in Dr. Johnson's character is that of his writing Dedications for the works of others, and even writing for another man's support. We have no reason to think that he received any compensation for these labors, because, on the contrary, some of those authors whom he thus benefited were unwilling to confess that they had been so aided, for fear it might be thought that Johnson had also added pecuniary assistance. Still they wished, at the time of the publication of their books, that the public should believe that Johnson wrote such Dedications, and perhaps it was their mean wish that the public should think that the writer was remunerated by them. We may know that their works sold better in consequence of his exertions, for Boswell said to

him once, "What an exceeding expense, sir, do you put us to in buying books to which you have written prefaces or dedications!" and Goldsmith having interposed a remark to the effect that probably little wit appeared in these prefaces, and Johnson having acquiesced, Boswell unnecessarily, and perhaps impertinently asks, Why these persons, then, should apply to a particular individual? Johnson, who, of course, could not answer that it was on account of the celebrity of his own name, or the superiority of his own composition, and would have been still more distressed to blazon or magnify his feelings of charity, simply replied, "Why, sir, one man has greater *readiness* at doing it than another." *We* can understand that it was his kindness of heart that led him in this way to be the coadjutor of a literary brother.

For some months he wrote articles in a periodical for poor Smart, who went out of his mind. But afterward finding that Smart was engaged under disadvantageous terms by a bookseller, and that in fact he was benefiting the bookseller rather than the unfortunate author, he gave it up. "I hoped," he said, "his wits would soon return to him: mine returned to me, and I wrote in the 'Universal Visitor' no longer."

Boswell gives a list of the number of dedications and prefaces which he wrote, and Johnson himself said, "Why, I have dedicated to the royal family all round; that is to say, to the last generation of the royal family:" and though generally insensible to the charm of music, we find him dedicating some for the German flute to the Duke of York. Though he did not feel himself responsible for every word he wrote in these prefaces, &c., yet we may be sure that, in the main, he wrote with much honesty of purpose, for he always made a stipulation that the book should be *innocent*—and, we find him, on an occasion of offering an excuse for certain flattery of the queen by Garrick, saying, "Why, sir, I would not *write*, I would not give solemnly under my hand a character beyond what I thought really true:" for a speech on the stage was merely formal. And we find* that even his usual politeness to ladies gave way to his habit of plain speaking; for when a lady once pressed him closely to read over her new play, and he

* Life of Hannah More, vol. i. p. 201.

told her that she might as well read it herself, to which she rejoined that she had no time, she had already so many irons in the fire: "Why then, madam," said he, quite out of patience, for the lady would not take his delay as a hint, "the best thing I can advise you to do, is to put your tragedy with your irons."

Boswell relates the humorous nature of some of the interviews between Johnson and sundry authors, men who in fear and trembling awaited his opinion. He remarks, "It is wonderful what a number and variety of writers, some of them even unknown to him, prevailed on his good-nature to look over their works, and suggest corrections and improvements." But perhaps his good-nature was rarely drawn upon in greater degree than by Davies, the bookseller, who, in his absence, ventured to publish two volumes of "Fugitive and Miscellaneous Pieces," as the production of the "authors of the Rambler." Johnson, we are told,* was inclined to resent this liberty, until he recollected Davies's narrow circumstances, when he cordially forgave him, and continued his kindness to him as usual.

Many other persons, besides authors, he assisted with recommendatory letters in lieu of dedications; and this he did with exceeding tenderness of manner both toward the person to whom he recommended, as well as toward the one recommended. On introducing a young man, named Paterson, who offered himself to the Academy, to Sir Joshua Reynolds, he writes, "How much it is in your power to favor or forward a young man, I do not know; nor do I know how much this candidate *deserves favor* by his personal merit, &c. I recommend him *as the son of my friend*." And mindful of the exceeding use even of a great man's countenance to a commencing author or artist, yet not wishing to bind Sir Joshua, he just adds gently, "You have heard of a man who asked no other favor of Sir Robert Walpole than that he would bow to him at his levée."

To Mr. Langton, and Dr. Warton, he wrote on behalf of a poor and aged painter, "who never rose higher than to get his immediate living, and at eighty-three was disabled by a slight stroke of the palsy," that they would exert their influ-

* See Chalmers's Biographical Dictionary, vol. xix. p. 66.

ence with the Bishop of Chester to obtain for him the next vacancy in a hospital. This was on June 29th, and on the following July 9th, he writes to the Rev. Dr. Vyse, requesting his assistance in recommending an old friend to the Archbishop, as governor of the Charter House. "He has," he states, "all the common claims to charity, being old, poor, and infirm to a great degree. He has likewise another claim, to which no scholar can refuse attention: he is by several descents *the nephew of Grotius*—of him from whom perhaps every man of learning has learned something." It appears that Archbishop Cornwallis readily complied with Dr. Johnson's request; but, unfortunately, a letter of thanks which he wrote to Dr. Vyse, and in which he further praises Grotius, has been lost, and Dr. Vyse only forwards a very short letter, "as a proof," he says, "of the very humane part which Dr. Johnson took in behalf of a distressed and deserving person." He must have written four letters to the Rev. Dr. Vyse, in the cause of this poor man.*

* In the *Public Advertiser* of May 13, 1778, is this letter, from a benevolent man of that time, Ignatius Sancho, and inserted unknown to him:

*To* Mr. B——

"Dear Sir—I could not see Mr. de Groote till this morning;—he approached the threshold, poor man! in very visible illness; yet, under the pressure of a multitude of infirmities, he could not forget his recent humane benefactor. With faltering speech he inquired much who you were; and in the conclusion, put up his most earnest petitions to the Father of mercies in your behalf; which (if the prayers of an indigent genius have as much efficacy as those of a fat bishop) I should hope and trust you may one day be better for. He is in direct descent from the famous Hugo Grotius, by the father's side .... His age is eighty-six; he had a paralytic stroke, and has a rupture. His eyes are dim, even with the help of spectacles. In truth, he comes close to Shakspeare's description, in his last age of man—'sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans every thing.'

"He has the honor to be known to Dr. Johnson, and the luck to be sometimes remembered by Mr. Garrick. If you help him, you do yourself a kindness—*me* a pleasure—and *he*, poor soul, a good, which he may one day throw in your teeth, in that country where good actions are in higher estimation than stars, ribbons, or crowns.

"Yours most respectfully, Ignatius Sancho.

"He lodges at No. 9, New Pye-street, Westminster."

This amiable letter-writer was foolishly given the name of Sancho,

Once, on going in a hackney-coach to dine with General Paoli, Boswell was surprised at Johnson first stopping at the bottom of Hedge-lane, in order to leave a letter, as he told him, "with good news for a poor man in distress." The poor man's name was Lowe, a painter, who lived at No. 3, in Hedge-lane, and was in extreme distress; and the "good news" most probably was that a picture of his had been admitted to the Exhibition of the Royal Academy. A few years afterward we read a very earnest letter from him to Lady Southwell in behalf of this son of poverty; and to Sir Joshua Reynolds, and Barry, he sent letters requesting a reconsideration of the merit of a picture painted by Lowe. He happily prevailed, and the picture was exhibited at the Royal Academy. The subject was the Deluge, when the water had nearly reached the summit of the last uncovered mountain, and one of the antediluvian race is represented as swimming toward this spot, with a child uplifted by his gigantic arm, where a lion, lean and hungry, stands ready to seize the child. Johnson said, "Sir, your picture is noble and probable." "A compliment, indeed," said Mr. Lowe, "from a man who can not lie, and can not be mistaken." Poor Lowe's gratitude exceeded his judgment of his patron's opinion in regard to pictures; for although the idea is certainly noble, yet it seems not to have been well executed, and he never afterward showed any talent. After this, we find two kind letters from Dr. Johnson to the poor painter, and he writes for him a letter of thanks to Lady Southwell, which he is to copy. Johnson, probably, had not a high idea of Lowe's talent, but he was a persevering friend to him. In one of his diaries we read this memorandum, "Paid L—— six guineas;" which Croker determines in favor of Lowe.

by a lady to whom he was presented in England, at the age of two years, on account of some resemblance to that facetious squire. He was a negro, and was baptized by the name of Ignatius, by the bishop at Carthagena. He seems to have idolized Sterne, and imitates him in his blanks and dashes—for he possessed some literary ability, though rising little above a servant; and Memoirs of his Life, with his letters and portrait, were thought worthy of publication. See *Gentleman's Magazine*, p. 437. 1782.

There was a man named Peyton, who wrote for him when dictating for his Dictionary, to whom he was always a friend. The delicacy with which Johnson would send him on an errand, thus making him useful without degrading him, is specially remarked by Boswell. We read of an entry in his diary, "On Good Friday I paid Peyton, without requiring work." He also writes letters to Mr. Langton and Mrs. Thrale on his behalf. To the former he says, "I put into his hands this morning four guineas. If you could collect three guineas more, it would clear him from his present difficulty;" and to the latter, "Peyton and Macbean are both starving, and I can not keep them." At this time Johnson had not much to spare, though in enjoyment of his pension; but, even at his poorest times, he would spare something for an old friend. Peyton was a man of considerable learning, and Dr. Johnson apprized Mrs. Piozzi of his death: "Poor Peyton expired this morning;" he then describes the intensity of his poverty, and his wife's illness, and would forgive him if even the thought of wishing to see his wife removed from the miseries and expenses of this painful world entered his mind; and thus concludes, "Such miscarriages, when they happen to those on whom many eyes are fixed, fill histories and tragedies; and tears have been shed for the sufferings, and wonder excited by the fortitude, of those who neither did nor suffered more than Peyton." This must recall to our minds that excellent article of rebuke in the Adventurer, in which whole armies are described as perishing in war, without drawing forth one sigh from the listening circle; but when a single instance of a dying officer is related, and the account of his wife wandering over the field of battle to search for him among the slain—then the tears flow fast, and that sympathy is aroused for the individual, which was denied to thousands. Johnson frequently relieved him, and bore the expenses of his burial, and also that of his wife.

There was a man very meanly dressed whom Dr. Johnson used to observe at the celebration of the Holy Communion. More than once he wished to speak with him, and on one occasion slipped some money into his hand, for he perceived him to be in want. "I invited home with me," he says, at last,

"the man whose pious behavior I had for several years observed on this day, and found him a kind of Methodist, full of texts, but ill instructed." He was altogether disappointed in him, but adds this amiable reflection: "Let me not be prejudiced hereafter against the appearance of piety in mean persons, who, with indeterminate notions, and perverse or inelegant conversation, perhaps are doing all they can."

The following memoranda are found together: "July 2, I paid Mr. Simpson ten guineas, which he had formerly lent me in my necessity." "July 8, I lent Mr. Simpson ten guineas more." There is something very pleasing in the relieved thus assisting a generous reliever. "July 16, I received seventy-five pounds. Lent Mr. Davies twenty-five."

To Mr. Hollyer he writes, "I have lately received a letter from our cousin Thomas Johnson, complaining of great distress. His distress, I suppose, is real. In 1772 (this was two years before), about Christmas, I sent him thirty pounds, because he thought he could do something in a shop: many have lived who began with less. In the summer, 1773, I sent him ten pounds more, as I had promised him. What was the event? In the spring, 1774, he wrote me, and that he was in debt for rent, and in want of clothes." Johnson expresses surprise at this, since no misfortune or misconduct is alluded to, and requests Mr. Hollyer to make inquiry. The man had visited Johnson in the summer: "I was in the country," he says, "which, perhaps, was well for us both. I might have used him harshly, and *then have repented.*" It would have been best for the poor man, most probably, if Johnson had used him harshly, for repentance with Johnson was not an empty sorrow. He concludes the letter, "I have sent a bill for five pounds, which you will be so kind to get discounted for him, and see the money properly applied, and give me your advice what can be done." Johnson thought that the consumption of forty pounds in sixteen months, and application for a further sum, showed that something must be wrong in the way of self-exertion, and therefore, though he could not refuse his kinsman, yet still he was not the man to be imposed upon by an idle or worthless person.

Mr. Strahan, the printer, had taken a poor boy from the country on Johnson's recommendation. Johnson having inquired after him, said, "Mr. Strahan, let me have five guineas on account, and I'll give this boy one. Nay, if a man recommends a boy, and does nothing for him, it is sad work. Call him down." Boswell followed Johnson into the court-yard behind Mr. Strahan's house, and there, he says, had proof of what Johnson professed, when he had said, "Some people tell you that they let themselves down to the capacity of their hearers. I never do that. I speak, uniformly, in as intelligible a manner as I can."

"Well, my boy," exclaimed Johnson, "how do you get on?" "Pretty well, sir; but they are afraid I arn't strong enough for some parts of the business." "Why, I shall be sorry for it," replied Johnson; "for when you consider with how little *mental power* and *corporeal* labor a printer can get a guinea a week, it is a very desirable occupation for you. Do you hear? take all the pains you can: and if this does not do, we must think of some other way of life for you. There's a guinea."

"Here," remarks Boswell, "was one of the many, many instances of his active benevolence;" at the same time he could not but smile at the slow and sonorous solemnity with which bending down, he addressed a short, thick-legged boy, who all the while was exceedingly awed and awkward. Certainly "*mental* power and *corporeal* labor" must have alarmed the poor boy, in the same degree that a worthy magistrate of this nineteenth century once terrified a hapless prisoner. The man had been convicted summarily during the absence of this magistrate, who, on coming into the justice room, desired to be informed of the evidence against him, in order that he might know that the sentence of imprisonment was just. Having found it to be so, he addressed the prisoner, and in his usual emphatic tone declared to him, that "he richly deserved to be *incarcerated*." The unfortunate man, who thought that nothing short of being impaled alive could be meant, or some other dreadful species of laceration, was glad enough, awe-stricken as he was, to be removed with whole skin and bones to the county jail.

In the case of a clergyman's daughter, who had been reduced to misery through an unfortunate marriage, he writes to the Rev. Dr. Hamilton, "in favor of one who has very little ability to speak for herself." He had known her for many years, and concludes his letter: "Her case admits of little deliberation: she is turned out of her lodging into the street. What my condition allows me to do for her, I have already done; and having no friend, she can have recourse only to the parish." On this, and other notes of a charitable nature, addressed to this clergyman, to whom he says, "You do every thing that is liberal and kind," the son of Dr. Hamilton observes, "They are of no farther interest, than as showing the goodness of Johnson's heart, and the spirit with which he entered into the cause and interests of an individual in distress, when he was almost on the bed of sickness and death himself."

It appears from another note at this time, that Johnson had, on the application of Miss Reynolds, frequently relieved other poor persons than those with whose misery or poverty he had himself become acquainted. Neither did loss of character altogether prevent the flowing forth of his charity. Boswell records: "His generous humanity to the miserable was almost beyond example. The following instance is well attested: coming home late one night, he found a poor woman lying in the street, so much exhausted that she could not walk; he took her upon his back, and carried her to his house, where he discovered that she was one of those wretched females who had fallen into the lowest state of vice, poverty and disease. Instead of harshly upbraiding her, he had her taken care of with all tenderness for a long time, at a considerable expense, till she was restored to health, and endeavored to put her into a virtuous way of living."* This is

* In the *Rambler* (No. 107, vol. ii. p. 213) we find these remarks from the pen of Dr. Johnson:

"It can not be doubted but that numbers follow this dreadful course of life, with shame, horror, and regret; but where can they hope for refuge? '*The world is not their friend, nor the world's law.*' Their sighs, and tears, and groans, are criminal in the eyes of their tyrants, the bully and the bawd, who fatten on their misery, and threaten them with want or a jail if they show the least design of escaping from their

as it should be, for the Almighty himself is kind to the unthankful and the evil. The sterner moralist may confine himself to too narrow an idea of duty, and so act upon it until no room for mercy be left in his mind; and if mercy were shut out, where would any of the human race be? We are all transgressors, but God is kind to us—God is provoked every day, but every day He is forgiving us. If the Almighty preferred a harsh sense of duty and justice rather than a loving one of mercy and forgiveness, where should we be? Oh let us ever remember with the moralizing poet, that,

"The right too rigid hardens into wrong!"

It is when an offense has been committed, when the offender is before us, and when his transgression and trespass have placed him entirely in our power—it is then alone that mercy can be shown: and we should be careful how we let slip the gracious opportunity afforded to us. Certainly we must prefer those who are of the household of faith, and who live holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, by the grace of God: yet never let us be tempted to cast those of another sort quite away. Let us be sure it is the safest and noblest part to be helpers of all. Who knows but what our temporal kindness may win the heart of a wicked man; and while we "give an alms, we may, in some sense, bestow a heaven too?" Our charity must not feed vice, and we should take care lest we be imposed on; but still, we should be especially heedful how we become the executioners of distress and want upon any man, though he be as evil as he is needy: nay, we must positively seek to do him good. "Happy

bondage. 'To wipe all tears from off all faces,' is a task too hard for mortals; but to alleviate misfortunes is often within the most limited power: yet the opportunities which every day affords of relieving the most wretched of human beings are overlooked and neglected, with equal disregard of policy and goodness."

This paper bears the date of March 26, 1751; but it is not possible to ascertain the precise period in which this act of humanity occurred. It happened during the time of Mrs. Desmoulins's sojourn at his hospitable house, and probably several years after the article in the *Rambler* was written.

I," exclaims a sound divine, "if I may so cheaply bestow a double life of body and of soul." Alas, and alas! there is much the very reverse of this passing daily and hourly in the world; and too many, if not hardened, yet become tied and bound by too strong a chain to their sins.

The same kind of ill-feeling is apparent, too often, among religious disputants—there is no charity bestowed on an antagonist. Bishop Sanderson has an admirable sermon* on the want of charity in Papists and Puritans toward Church-of-England-men—"as if," he says of the latter, "all but themselves were scarce to be owned either as *brethren*, or *professors*, or *Christians* or *saints*, or *godly men*:" all which names they appropriate to themselves!

* Sanderson's Sermons, p. 63, preached in 1633.

## CHAPTER VI.

### CONTINUED INSTANCES.

In prosecuting the great work of his English Dictionary, Dr. Johnson employed six amanuenses, and "to all these painful laborers," says Boswell, "he showed a never ceasing kindness, so far as they stood in need of it." For Sheils, who died of a consumption, "he had much tenderness;" but of his kindness to Macbean we have the fullest account. For him Johnson wrote a preface to a work on ancient Geography; and very many years afterward obtained admission for him as a poor brother into the Charter House, by an application to Lord Thurlow; and here we find him again writing to the Rev. Dr. Vyse, as he had before done in the case of De Groot, the nephew, or grandson, of Grotius. He states that he is one of his old friends, a man of great learning, and "being a modest scholar, will escape embarrassment" (in attending before the Archbishop), "if you are so kind as to introduce him, by which you will do a kindness to a man of great merit," &c. Nearly four years after this deed of charity, he writes, "A message came to me yesterday to tell me that Macbean is dead, after three days of illness. He was one of those who, as Swift says, *stood as a screen between me and death*. He has, I hope, made a good exchange. He was very pious: he was very innocent: he did no ill: and of doing good a continual tenor of distress allowed him few opportunities: he was very highly esteemed in the Charter House." Macbean was indeed poor, for after being several years librarian to the Duke of Argyle, he was left without a shilling: it is gratifying to observe that Johnson lost not sight of him after he had entered this welcome asylum. The *screen between me and death* must allude to his being the oldest surviving friend of Dr. Johnson's—and Johnson died in the same year. The death of each friend of our early years

must be a *memento mori* to us, but when it comes to the last remaining one, the fact which the warning serves to remind us of must be nigh at hand. Would that Johnson could have, at this time, spoken in the language of Cicero, when, on lamenting the death of Scipio, he found other consolation than in the remembrance of his beloved friend's virtues! "Were I totally deprived," he says, "of these soothing reflections, *my age*, however, *would afford me great consolation:* as I can not, by the common course of nature, long be separated from him."

Johnson's charity commenced with his earliest years of manhood and only ceased with his death. Boyse, the poet, one of his very early companions, was assisted by him. On one occasion Johnson collected a sum to redeem his friend's clothes from the hands of the pawnbroker; and "the sum," said Johnson, "was collected by sixpences, at a time when *to me sixpence was a serious consideration.*" His very last words on his death-bed were those of kindness and blessing to one of his fellow mortals.

One of the most extraordinary and continued acts of kindness in Dr. Johnson's life, was that which opened his house as a residence to several persons of indigent circumstances. Let us first tell the case of Mrs. Williams. She was the daughter of a Welsh physician, and excited the compassion of Dr. Johnson, on coming to London to have an operation performed on her eyes. He took her into his house for the greater convenience in this performance, and, on its failure (for she became totally blind), he never desired, so long as he was in possession of a house, that she should depart from under its roof. Sir John Hawkins, Lady Knight, Miss Hawkins, and Boswell, all speak highly of her talent and pleasing conversation; and so great was her judgment, that the former asserts, "Johnson, in many exigencies, found her an able counselor, and seldom showed his wisdom more than when he hearkened to her advice." In return, however, the knight asserts, she received inestimable advantages from her intercourse with Johnson. He himself says of her, "Her curiosity was universal, her knowledge was very extensive, and she sustained forty years of misery with steady fortitude." Han-

nah More, in describing a visit to Dr Johnson's house,* after saying, "Can you picture to yourselves the palpitation of our hearts as we approached his mansion?"—observes, "Mrs. Williams, the blind poet, who lives with him, was introduced to us. She is engaging in her manners, her conversation lively and entertaining." With all this praise in her favor, we must be sorry to find Chalmers speaking of her temper as being "far from pleasant," and of her "fretful and peevish manner," under the roof of one by whom she was "protected and cheered by every act of kindness and tenderness which he could have showed to the nearest relation."†

She was poor, and mainly supported by the voluntary contributions of others. Dr. Johnson obtained for her pecuniary aid from Mrs. Montague (a lady whom he solicited also on behalf of a Mrs. Ogle, Davies, a bankrupt bookseller, &c.); from Garrick also he asked a benefit-night at the theatre, and was eager in disposing of the tickets—(from this she derived £200); and he greatly assisted her in some literary undertakings; Sir John Hawkins stating, that by her quarto volume of "Miscellanies," to which Dr. Johnson was known to contribute much from his pen, she increased her little fund to three hundred pounds. Lady Knight thinks, that, ultimately, she possessed an annual income of about thirty-five or forty pounds a year. This, which was partly obtained by Johnson's exertions on her behalf, was greatly aided by his unceasing kindness to her throughout her free abode in his house; and we can perceive that his magnanimous spirit prompted him to treat her with as much politeness and humane consideration as though she had been a lady of the first quality and wealth.

But, with all the alleviations provided for her, and with much cheerfulness under the sad deprivation of sight, she seems to have been of an irritable and peevish temper. All agree in their testimony of this, though some endeavor to palliate it. She would frequently quarrel with Johnson's favorite negro servant, and then would taunt him with the

* Memoirs, vol. i. p. 49.

† Alexander Chalmers's Biographical Dictionary, vol. xix. pp. 59–64. Johnson himself afterward proves the truth of Chalmers's statement.

money spent on Barber's education, saying, This is your scholar, on whose education you have spent £300." On one occasion, Boswell, who had long observed her asperity of manner, says, "Mrs. Williams was very peevish; and I wondered at Johnson's patience with her now, as I had *often done on similar occasions*. The truth is, that his humane consideration of the *forlorn and indigent state* in which this lady was left by her father, induced him to treat her with *the utmost tenderness*." Johnson himself writes of her, when he had procured her accommodation in the country, on account of illness, "Age, sickness, and *pride*, have made her so peevish, that I was forced to bribe the maid to stay with her by a stipulation of half-a-crown a week over her wages." He had supplied her with all conveniences to make her excursion and abode pleasant and useful. The next year, in a letter to Mrs. Thrale, he writes: "Williams hates every body; Levett hates Desmoulins, and does not love Williams; Desmoulins hates them both; Poll (Miss Carmichael) loves none of them." During her illness he ever spoke tenderly of her, and in his diary this affecting record is made, "This has been a day of great emotion; the office of the Communion for the Sick has been performed in poor Mrs. Williams's chamber. At home I see almost all my companions dead or dying..... I hope that I shall learn to die as dear Williams is dying, who was very cheerful before and after this awful solemnity, and seems to resign herself with calmness and hope upon eternal mercy." To Doctor Brocklesby he writes: "Be so kind as to continue your attention to Mrs. Williams. It is a great consolation to the well, and still greater to the sick, that they find themselves not neglected; and I know that you will *be desirous of giving comfort, even where you have no great hope of giving help*." On hearing of her death, he was much affected, and composed a solemn prayer on the event. To Mrs. Montague, who had allowed her a pension, he writes to communicate the tidings of her death, and says, "You have, madam, the satisfaction of having alleviated the sufferings of a woman of great merit, both intellectual and moral." To Mr. Langton, he writes, "I have lost a companion (Mrs. Williams), to whom I have had recourse for domestic amuse-

ment for thirty years, and whose variety of knowledge never was exhausted; and now return to a habitation vacant and desolate." And in another to the same friend he alludes to Mrs. Williams, "whose death, following that of Levett, has now made my house a solitude. She left her little substance to a charity school. She is, I hope, where there is neither darkness" (in reference to her blindness), "nor want, nor sorrow."

Mrs. Desmoulins was another inmate of Dr. Johnson's house, and a recipient of his charity; she also was the daughter of a physician, who left a large family in poverty, she herself having made an imprudent marriage, and now become a widow. Johnson allowed her half-a-guinea a week, above a twelfth part of his pension, and also lodged her daughter under his roof. On Good Friday, 1779, we find this record in his diary: "I maintain Mrs. Desmoulins and her daughter; other good of myself I know not where to find, except a little charity." We find him also writing to the Rev. Dr. Vyse, to ask for the situation of matron of the Chartreux for her, and he says, "She is in great distress, and therefore may probably receive the benefit of a charitable foundation." Such an appointment (which she did not obtain) would have relieved Dr. Johnson, but at the same time, he was well aware that it would have added to her comfort and self-respect, albeit to be a pensioner of Dr. Johnson's was not without honor. She did not live altogether in peace with the other inmates, for Johnson records, "To-day Mrs. Williams and Mrs. Desmoulins had a scold, and Williams was going away; but I bid her not *turn tail*, and she came back, and rather got the upper hand." Again, to Mrs. Thrale he writes: "Mr. Levett and Mrs. Desmoulins have vowed eternal hate." Yet Johnson, when she was absent, regretted the loss of her society, and she, to the last, was a faithful friend to him, sitting in his sick chamber at the moment of his death. This conduct does not justify a remark of Boswell's, who, when speaking of her reception under Johnson's roof, says, "whose doors were always open to the unfortunate, and who well observed the precept of the Gospel, for he was kind *to the unthankful* and *to the evil*." Mrs. Desmoulins, whatever may have been her transitory irritations, was neither unthankful nor evil.

Passing over Miss Carmichael, of whom so little is known, come we to the unfortunate Mr. Robert Levett. In the story of this man there is much of mingled goodness and romance. An Englishman by birth, and the eldest of ten children, he commenced life as a waiter at a coffee-house in Paris, where some surgeons, who frequented the house, took a liking to him, themselves taught him something of their art, and obtained free admission for him to the lectures of their ablest professors in pharmacy and anatomy. In London he became a popular practitioner among the humbler classes, who, of course, could afford to pay him only very small sums, and often paid him in kind. As regards his marriage, he was made the victim of an artful and profligate woman, and yet he was nearly sixty years of age at this time. Johnson writes to Baretti, "Levett is lately married; not without much suspicion that he has been wretchedly cheated in his match;" and he used further to say, that compared with the marvels of this transaction, the Arabian Nights seemed familiar occurrences. It appears that she persuaded Levett, although he became acquainted with her under the poorest circumstances, that she was unrighteously kept out of a large fortune; yet, before he had been married four months, a writ was taken out against him for debts contracted by her. Then he was obliged to be secreted, but ere long she ran away from him, was tried at the Old Bailey for robbery, acquitted, and a separation took place; from that time, Johnson taking him to his home. All this misfortune only moved the compassionate heart of Johnson; and he was remarkable for standing by those who were distressed, and relieving those who could never recompense him. He seems to have been a man of ungainly appearance, for Boswell contrasts the "awkward and uncouth Robert Levett" with the brilliant Colonel Forester, of the Guards, who wrote the "Polite Philosopher," when showing that Dr. Johnson associated with persons most widely different in manners, abilities, rank, and accomplishments; at the same time, Boswell thought well of him, for, in a letter to Johnson, he says, "I wish many happy years to good Mr. Levett, who, I suppose, holds his usual place at your breakfast table." Levett seems to

have held the matutinal appointment of lord of the tea-kettle, and in the absence of the other inmates, to have become tea-maker. Johnson, who always treated him with "marked courtesy," as though he was an equal or more, and when absent, writing kindly to him, would observe, that "Levett was indebted to him for nothing more than house-room, his share in a penny loaf at breakfast, and now and then a dinner on a Sunday." This was no mean debt, but how insignificant when compared with that contracted from the constant experience of Johnson's condescension and courtesy. He resided for about twenty years under this great man's roof, "who," says Stevens, "never wished him to be regarded as an inferior, or treated him like a dependent." His temper, notwithstanding, seems to have been irritable, and perhaps sullen. It has already been seen that "Levett hates Desmoulins:" and we find again Dr. Johnson himself saying, "Mr. Levett and Mrs. Desmoulins have vowed eternal hate. Levett is *the more insidious, and wants me to turn her out:*" and again, "Mrs. Williams is come home better, and the habitation is all concord and harmony, *only Mr. Levett harbors discontent.*" It was not long, however, before Mrs. Williams and Mrs. Desmoulins had a violent quarrel, so continually was dissension arising among those who may be almost termed his pensioners.

Yet Johnson held him in great esteem, and regretted him in his death. To Mr. Laurence he communicates the intelligence of "our old friend's" death, and remarks: "So has ended the long life of a very useful, and very blameless man." To Mrs. Thrale he writes, "My home has lost Levett; a man who took interest in every thing, and therefore ready at conversation;" to Mrs. Porter, "The loss of friends will be felt, and poor Levett has been a faithful adherent for thirty years;" and to Captain Langton, "At night, at Mrs. Thrale's, as I was musing in my chamber, I thought, with uncommon earnestness, that, however I might alter my mode of life, or whithersoever I might remove, I would endeavor to retain Levett about me: in the morning my servant brought me word that Levett was called to another state; a state for which, I think, he was not unprepared, for he was

very useful to the poor. *How much soever I valued him,* I now wished that I had valued him more." We must construe the words, "*for* he was very useful to the poor," in conjunction with Dr. Johnson's belief in the merits and satisfaction of our Lord's death, and then we shall not be led astray by them. Poor Levett died very suddenly. "There passed not, I believe," says Johnson, "a minute between health and death." To others, he affectionately mentioned the decease of Levett; but the man is immortalized rather by Johnson's pathetic verses, the first three stanzas of which may be appropriately quoted here:

"Condemn'd to Hope's delusive mine,
As on we toil from day to day,
By sudden blast or slow decline
*Our social comforts drop away.*

"Well tried *through many a varying year,*
*See Levett to the grave descend;*
*Officious, innocent, sincere,*
*Of every friendless name the friend.*

"*Yet still he fills affection's eye,*
Obscurely wise and coarsely kind:
Nor, letter'd arrogance, deny
Thy praise to merit unrefined."

Much as these verses may be written to the praise of poor Levett, yet how much more do they, unwittingly, commemorate the benevolent heart of the poet, of whom it had many years before been said, after the manner of Shakspeare's forgiving cardinal, when accused of showing kindness to a man of reported bad character, "He is now become miserable, and that insures the protection of Johnson." The following entry has been found in one of his memorandum books: "January 20, Sunday, Robert Levett was buried in the church-yard of Bridewell, between one and two in the afternoon. He died on Thursday, 17th, about seven the morning, by an instantaneous death. *He was an old and faithful* friend: I have known him from about 1746. *Commendavi.* May God have mercy on him! May He have mercy on me!"

In the "Rambler" (No. 54), Dr. Johnson had written

long before, "When a friend is carried to his grave, we at once find excuses for every weakness, and palliations of every fault . . . . . We consider, with the most afflictive anguish, the pain which we have given, and now can not alleviate, and the losses which we have caused, and now can not repair!"

The notice of the inmates of Dr. Johnson's dwelling would not be complete without a brief sketch of Francis Barber, his faithful servant, almost uninterruptedly, for nearly thirty-two years. He was a negro, brought from Jamaica to this country by Colonel Bathurst, who, in his will, left him his freedom: and Johnson, who was probably poor at this time, seems to have taken him out of compassion for his forlorn state, as well as out of love to his intimate friend Dr. Bathurst, son of the colonel. It has been seen that Dr. Johnson put him to school, often wrote in terms of great kindness to him, and read and prayed with him. Twice, through some wayward fancy, he left his master, but was right glad to get into his old quarters again: for even when separated Johnson sought to do him good; and the servant could not refrain from an occasional visit to his old master's house. He, too, when comfortably ensconced in his former service, did not escape a participation in the domestic dissensions, for we find that Johnson used to dread "having his ears filled with the complaints of Mrs. Williams, of Frank's neglect of his duty, and *inattention to the interests of his master*, and of Frank against Mrs. Williams, for the authority she assumed over him, and excercised with an unwarrantable severity." It may easily be guessed on whose side the fault most lay, yet Johnson would have been the first to rebuke any impertinence offered to poor, ill-tempered Mrs. Williams. Boswell seems to have entertained a good opinion of Frank, saying, on one occasion, "I was happy to find myself again in my friend's study, and was glad to see my old acquaintance, Mr. Francis Barber." In the famous picture of "A Literary party at Sir Joshua Reynolds's," Barber is represented in his capacity of servant, and one can not help thinking but that he, in common with the distinguished members of that evening's hospitality, even while bringing in

more wine, is casting his eyes toward his master, and listening to his rare discourse.

Francis Barber had always been treated by Johnson as "a humble friend," and he was faithful to the last. His master, with his usual generous feeling, was mindful of him in his will, and having previously asked Dr. Brocklesby, what would be a proper annuity to a favorite servant, and the doctor answering that much depended on the circumstances of the master, and that fifty pounds per annum would be considered a handsome reward from a nobleman: "Then," said Johnson, "shall I be *nobilissimus*, for I mean to leave Frank seventy pounds a year, and I desire you to tell him so." He did remember him handsomely in his will, and Barber retired to Lichfield, according to Dr. Johnson's request, and died, in the year 1801, in the Infirmary at Stafford, after undergoing a painful operation.*

Thus we have seen something of Dr. Johnson's household, and the unfortunate discord reigning therein; all to the advantage of his humane character with posterity. "The dissensions," says Mrs. Piozzi, "of the many odd inhabitants of his house, distressed and mortified him exceedingly. He was really sometimes afraid of going home, because he was so sure to be met at the door with numberless complaints; and he used to lament that they made his life miserable *from the impossibility he found of making theirs happy*, when every favor he bestowed on one was wormwood to the rest." And how noble his forgiveness as well as his forbearance! "If, however," continues this lady, "I ventured to blame their ingratitude, and condemn their conduct, *he would instantly set about softening the one, and justifying the other;* and finished commonly by telling me, that I knew not how to make allowances for situations I never experienced." Sir John Hawkins draws a still more distressing picture of these "enemies to his peace," and their insults, "all which he chose to endure, rather than put an end to their clamors, by ridding his home of such thankless and troublesome guests. Nay," adds the knight, "so insensible was he of the ingratitude of those whom he suffered thus to hang upon him, and

* See Gentleman's Magazine, 1793.

among whom he may be said to have divided an income *which was little more than sufficient for his own support*, that he would submit to reproach and personal affront from some of them: even Levett would sometimes insult him; and Mrs. Williams, in her paroxysms of rage, has been known to drive him from her presence." And to Mrs. Thrale he himself writes, "Mrs. Williams is not yet returned: but discord and discontent reign in my humble habitation as in the palaces of monarchs." How incomparably grand—how much after the pattern, though still at an infinite distance, of Deity itself, is Dr. Johnson's conduct in these instances! —when we know the full power of ridding and avenging himself of these rebellious disturbers that was at his command; that he had only to speak the word, and his home had become peaceable; but, alas! *they* would have endured great deprivation. His strong mind regarded not its own discomfort, so long as temptation drove not compassion from his heart. Doubtless, his great literary pursuits obtained for him but a partial oblivion of these domestic broils, and it is of course most probable that he had often conflicts within himself on the occasions of these hostile scenes. Yet we may believe that a perception of the misery that would come upon these persons, did they once forsake the shelter of his roof, ever prevented the denial of his home and hospitality to them: and so he endured with consummate patience an evil that he could have put an end to, had not the far-seeing benevolence of his heart abhorred the summary proceeding which they, as it were, appeared to court; or, at all events, the one wished the other to experience. What a picture is this of the larger world of ungrateful men, and GOD over all, provoked every day!

## CHAPTER VII.

### FURTHER INSTANCES.

From much of Dr. Johnson's conduct in other ways, we perceive a kindness and tenderness of disposition. He usually experienced a repentant sorrow on depreciating the character of others, or on speaking sharply to them. In that remarkable interview with George the Third in the Queen's Library at Buckingham House, he, in conversation with the king, exposed an error of Dr. Hill, who was really a sort of literary and medical quack. However, as soon as he began to discover that he was depreciating the man in the eyes of his sovereign, he commenced saying something in his favor, and thus, in great measure, sought to remove the effect of what he had before, yet quite truly, spoken. Boswell mentions, that he had heard Sir Joshua Reynolds, "a nice and delicate observer of manners, particularly remark, that when upon any occasion Johnson had been rough to any person in company, he took the first opportunity of reconciliation by drinking to him, or addressing his discourse to him;" if, however, the other had not grace to accept this reconciliation, then it gave him no more concern. We have an instance of Dr. Johnson's kindness, in this manner, handsomely accepted. At a dinner Johnson had spoken roughly to Goldsmith, as indeed the latter somewhat deserved; yet, on meeting in the evening at the club, Dr. Johnson observed Goldsmith sitting silently, and evidently sullen under the reprimand. He perceived this, and said aside to the others, "I'll make Goldsmith forgive me;" and then called to him, in a loud voice, "Dr. Goldsmith, something passed to-day where you and I dined; *I ask your pardon.*" Goldsmith answered, placidly, "It must be much from you, sir, that I take ill." And so at once, observes Boswell, the difference was over, and they

were on as easy terms as ever, and Goldsmith rattled away as usual.

Of Goldsmith we may say, *Nil fuit unquam sic impar sibi;* and, as Machiavel said of Lorenzo de Medici, "The gravity of his life, if compared with its levity, must make him appear a composition of two different persons, each incompatible, and, as it were, impossible to be joined together." In the Life of Garrick we are told by its author, "The Doctor was a perfect heteroclite, an inexplicable existence in creation;" at one time all envy and malice, and at another overflowing with generosity and benevolence, so that "he might be said to consist of two distinct souls." However, we are told that he always openly spoke his mind—that he never seriously formed any scheme, or joined in any combination, to hurt any man living—that he ever relieved the poor, and rather than not relieve the distressed, he would borrow—and when Baretti, whom he greatly disliked, was sent by Sir John Fielding to Newgate, on a charge of murder, he opened his purse, and would have given him every shilling it contained; at the same time he insisted upon going in the coach with him to his place of confinement.

The author of this book* says, "The first man of the age, who, from the extensiveness of his genius and benevolence of his mind, is superior to the little envy and mean jealousy which adhere so closely to most authors, and especially to those of equivocal merit, took pleasure in introducing Dr. Goldsmith to his intimate friends, persons of eminent rank and distinguished abilities." Yet we are told by the same authority, of Goldsmith, that when "his great literary friend was commended in his hearing, he could not restrain his uneasiness, but exclaimed, in a kind of agony, 'No more, I desire you; you harrow up my soul.'" Johnson well knew the envious feeling that was often in Goldsmith, and therefore the more observable is his kindness toward him; and Goldsmith, as we have seen, could express himself highly of Dr. Johnson. It may be observed, that the being envious of another does not derogate, even in our own mind, from the dignity or excellence of that other; it is only a sign, and to

* The Memoirs of David Garrick, by Thomas Davies.

ourselves, of a sense of our inferiority; so that, putting the two anecdotes together, Goldsmith may well think highly of Dr. Johnson, and still be impatient of hearing him praised. Few men, alas! pass through life free from envy, though all would disown the passion; and our author writes, "I never knew any man but one (Dr. Johnson), who had the honor and courage to confess that he had a tincture of envy in him."

We learn from Mrs. Piozzi, that when this very author (Thomas Davies) had printed some compositions of Dr. Johnson's, unknown to him, the Doctor was angry, and went up to London to speak to Davies about it. At his return Mrs. Thrale asked him how the matter ended. "Why," said he, "I was a fierce fellow, and pretended to be very angry, and Thomas was a good-natured fellow, and pretended to be very sorry; so *there* the matter ended. I believe the dog loves me dearly. 'Mr. Thrale' (turning round to my husband), 'what shall you and I do that is good for Tom Davies? We will do something for him, to be sure.'" The fact was, Davies was a poor man;* and this circumstance at once turned away the wrath of one with whom he had certainly taken a very great liberty; for he not only published, without leave, pieces written by him, but he also published, together with these, pieces *not* written by Dr. Johnson, and yet sent them all forth as though composed by "the Author of the Rambler." He continued to love Davies cordially. "One day," says Boswell, "when he had treated him with too much asperity, Tom, who was not without pride and spirit, went off in a passion; but he had hardly reached home, when Frank, who had been sent after him, delivered this note: 'Come, come, dear Davies, I am always sorry when we quarrel; send me word that we are friends.'" Davies himself has written the "Life of Garrick," in a pleasing, sensible, kind-hearted manner; and whenever he alludes therein to Dr. Johnson, it is in terms of the highest admiration and praise.

Very trifling things indicate the kind or unkind disposition

* See Chalmers's Biog. Dict. vol. xix. p. 66.

of a man. Mr. Beauclerk had a portrait of Dr. Johnson, on the frame of which these words were inscribed :

"Ingenium ingens
Inculto latet hoc sub corpore."

But when this picture, after Mr. Beauclerk's death, became the property of Mr. Langton, the words were removed. Johnson said, complacently, "It was kind in you to take it off;" and then, after a short pause, added, "*and not unkind* in him to put it on."

Johnson was undoubtedly severe at times, and especially stout in maintaining an argument when aware that he was not altogether taking the best side ; but then, this was for the time only, for he would take an opportunity afterward of confessing himself in the wrong. Thus, after a night's debate of this kind, he accosted Mr. Morgan, as soon as he met him in the breakfast-room next morning : "Sir, I have been thinking on our dispute last night : *you were in the right.*" Boswell, endeavoring, on another occasion, to excuse him, offers this opinion on his great friend : "Pliability of address I conceive to be inconsistent with that majestic power of mind which he possesses, and which produces such noble effects. A lofty oak will not bend like a supple willow." Yes, but why should "majestic power of mind" place itself in the predicament of requiring "pliability of address" in order to extricate itself, albeit such pliability be not exercised ? Occasional stubborness of mind, and a habit of giving harsh denials, are the least amiable traits in Johnson's greatly benevolent character ; and these can hardly be excused.

"Johnson's charity to the poor," writes Boswell, "was uniform and extensive, both from inclination and principle." Like Goldsmith, when he had exhausted his own purse in acts of liberality, he would beg for others, if in real distress ; this "he did judiciously as well as humanely." The Rev. Dr. Maxwell says, "He frequently gave all the silver in his pocket to the poor, who watched him between his house and the tavern where he dined." "Those," records Miss Reynolds, "who knew his uniform benevolence, and its actuating principles—steady virtue and true holiness—will readily

agree with me, that peace and goodwill toward man were the natural emanations of his heart. I shall never forget the impression," she continues, "I felt in Dr. Johnson's favor, the first time I was in his company, on his saying, that, as he returned to his lodgings at one or two o'clock in them orning, he often saw poor children asleep on the thresholds and stalls, and *that he used to put pennies into their hands to buy them a breakfast.*" "And this at a time," observes Croker, "when he himself was living on *pennies.*"

Boswell observes, "Johnson's love of little children, which he discovered upon all occasions, calling them 'pretty dears,' and giving them sweatmeats, was an undoubted proof of the real humanity and gentleness of his disposition."

Retrenchment in charity he thought should be the last consideration when obliged to economize. He writes to Mrs. Thrale, at the same time not allowing her to diminish a two-guinea annual subscription, "Whatever reasons you have for frugality, it is not worth while to save a guinea a year by withdrawing it from a public charity." But, beneficent as he was himself in almsgiving, he thought it better, in general, to spend money than to give it away. "A man," he said, "who spends his money, is sure he is doing good with it; he is not so sure when he gives it away. A man who spends ten thousand a year will do more good than a man who spends two thousand" (in industry) "and gives away eight."

Many, very many kind things did Dr. Johnson write and speak. How delighted he was with Boswell's kindness to an old man of eighty-eight, whom he had put into a dwelling more comfortable and suitable; how he also besought him to be a kind landlord to his tenantry! With what pleasure he hears that he is on good terms with his father! "Cultivate his kindness," he writes, "by all honest and manly means. . . . . It is best not to be angry; and best, in the next place, to be quickly reconciled. May you and your father pass the remainder of your time in reciprocal benevolence!" Again, in a later letter, "Please him as much as you can, *and add no pain to his last years.*"

To another correspondent, Mr. George Strahan, he had

before said, "To give pain ought always to be painful." What a golden saying! "Those who have loved longest," he tells Mrs. Thrale, "love best." "A friend may be often found and lost; but an *old friend* never can be found." He always felt severely the loss of old friends, and says in a melancholy manner to Mrs. Strahan, "When we have all done all that we can, one friend must in time lose the other!" He was a firm friend to many, and remarkably so to the unfortunate Dr. Dodd, who fervently addressed him at the last, "Accept, thou *great* and *good* heart, my earnest and fervent thanks for all thy benevolence and kind efforts in my behalf. Oh, Dr. Johnson! as I sought your knowledge in an early hour of life, would to Heaven I had cultivated the love and acquaintance of so excellent a man!" &c. Certainly, Dr. Johnson's efforts on behalf of this wretched man were astonishing—even invoking the supreme (human) power to pay attention to the voice of the people—a voice not usually invested by him with a tittle too much reverence.

How beautiful is his record, after being in the house at the time of Mr. Thrale's death: "I felt almost the last flutter of his pulse, and looked *for the last time upon the face that for fifteen years had never been turned upon me but with respect or benignity.* Farewell. May God, that delighteth in mercy, have had mercy on thee!" How benign, too, is this extract from one of his little manuscript diaries: "Afternoon spent cheerfully and elegantly, I hope without offense to God or man: though in no holy duty, yet in the general exercise and cultivation of benevolence!" and how mildly, yet firmly, does he remonstrate with Mrs. Piozzi on her marriage: "I breathe out," he says, in the commencement, "one sigh more of tenderness, perhaps useless, but at least sincere!"

A man that is kind to others will always most sensibly appreciate any kindness done to himself. We see this exemplified in many cases in Dr. Johnson's career; and especially toward its close was he thankful for any kind conduct shown toward him by his friends. How hearty his expressions, when told of the applications made to Lord Thurlow for means by which a journey to Italy, on account of his health, might

be accomplished: "This," said he "is taking prodigious pains about a man!" "Oh, sir," said Boswell, with most sincere affection, "your friends would do every thing for you!" He paused—grew more and more agitated—till tears started into his eyes, and he exclaimed with fervent emotion, "God bless you all!" After a short silence, Boswell being affected to tears, he renewed and extended his grateful benediction: "God bless you all, for JESUS CHRIST'S sake!" He rose suddenly, and quitted the room, quite melted in tenderness.

Johnson was always kind and affectionate to Boswell, for whom he had evidently a sincere esteem, whatever he thought of the powers of his mind: and even, on an occasion when Boswell thought that Dr. Johnson had rudely interrupted him in a conversation at Sir Joshua Reynolds's, and expressed his sense of uneasiness, "Well," exclaimed Johnson, "I am sorry for it. I'll make it up to you, twenty different ways, as you please." Mrs. Boswell did not like Johnson, but nothing can exceed the playfulness of his constant allusions to her dislike. On her husband's return home, he writes to this good lady, "Pray take care of him, and tame him. The only thing in which I have the honor to agree with you is, in loving him." In a letter to Boswell, he says, "I hope my irreconcileable enemy, Mrs. Boswell, is well. Desire her not to transmit her malevolence to the young people:" and soon after, "If Mrs. Boswell would be but friends with me, we might now shut the temple of Janus." In a little time Mrs. Boswell begins to relent, and Boswell conveys her compliments to Dr. Johnson, and communicates that she is abont to send him some orange marmalade of her own making. Johnson replies that he is glad that his old enemy begins to feel some remorse, and jocularly says, "Tell Mrs. Boswell that I shall taste her marmalade cautiously at first; *Timeo Danaos et dona ferentes.* 'Beware,' says the Italian proverb, 'of a reconciled enemy.' But when I find it does me no harm, I shall then receive it, and be thankful for it, as a pledge of firm, and I hope of unalterable kindness. *She is, after all, a dear, dear lady.*" To Mrs. Boswell herself he writes, "Very little of the pleasure which I received at the arrival of your jar of mar-

malade arose from eating it. I received it as a token of friendship, as a proof of reconciliation, *things much sweeter than sweetmeats*," &c.; and he congratulates himself, that, by having her kindness, he has a double security for the continuance of Mr. Boswell's. On hearing of her illness, he writes in affectionate terms of much concern, and soon after, says, "Tell her, I hope we shall be at variance no more!" Afterward, he urges Boswell to bring her to London for change of air, and characteristically says, "*I will retire from my apartments for her accommodation.* Behave kindly to her, and keep her cheerful." It is gratifying to find that Mrs. Boswell reciprocated this kindness, for in allusion to some epistle, he writes to Boswell, "Such a letter as Mrs. Boswell's might draw any man not wholly motionless a great way. Pray tell the dear lady how much her civility and kindness have touched and gratified me." It may be remarked that Johnson always addressed the female in more endearing terms than the male sex, never to the latter exceeding "Dear Sir," while to the former, "dear, dear," "dearest, dearest," "beloved," &c., are frequently met with. Previous to his answer to Mrs. Boswell's letter, he had written to her husband, "I love you so much, that I would be glad to love all that love you, and that you love: and I have love very really for Mrs. Boswell, if she thinks it worthy of acceptance:" and he had also said to Mr. Boswell, "Were I in distress, there is no man to whom I should sooner come than to you. I should like to come and have a cottage in your park, toddle about, live mostly on milk, *and be taken care of by Mrs. Boswell.* She and I are good friends now; are we not?" On this knowledge, probably, of Johnson's attachment to her husband, and herself, and their locality also, she sent a cordial invitation on hearing of his illness: and so ended the "fytte" of stalwart knight and lady fair.

With him, indeed, all was open and sincere. He never pretended to feel, but ever reduced his feelings to practice. When Boswell once said, that he had often blamed himself for not feeling for others so sensibly as many *say* they do, Johnson replied, "Sir, don't be duped by them any more.

You will find these very feeling people are not very ready to do you good. They *pay* you by *feeling*." And, at another time, when Boswell made much the same observation, he said, "Sir, it is affectation to pretend to feel the distress of others as much as they do themselves.* It is equally so, as if one should pretend to feel as much pain while a friend's leg is cutting off, as he does. No, sir! you have expressed the rational and just nature of sympathy. I would have gone to the extremity of the earth to have preserved this (Mr. Thrale's) boy." In a multitude of instances this opinion of Dr. Johnson's may be decidedly the true one, but there are cases in which, cases of intimate relation and friendship, we may feel for another's calamity more intensely than he feels for himself, even to the laying down our lives for our friends—while assuredly, there is, alas! far too much of the spirit denounced by St. James (James ii. 16), in the world. Dr. Johnson was wholly free from this; he did substantial good. "He told me the other day," says Hannah More, "he hated to hear people whine about metaphysical distresses, when there was so much want and hunger in the world." And she, who knew and loved Johnson, has hit off his character with her usual smartness of observation. "In Dr. Johnson," she writes, "some contrarieties very harmoniously meet: if he has too little charity for the opinions of others, and too little patience with their faults, *he has the greatest tenderness for their persons*." Yes, as we have seen, no man forgave more readily than he did, when occasionally hurried on to passion, or to rude contradiction, by some slight provocation, or through impatience at some resistance, or non-acquiescence to his authority. But in all cases of a serious kind, he practiced the noblest part of true

* In the *Rambler* (No. 99) he says, "To love all men is our duty, so far as it includes a general habit of benevolence, and readiness of occasional kindness; but to love all equally is impossible," &c.

"The necessities of our condition require a thousand offices of tenderness, which mere regard for the species will never dictate. Every man has frequent grievances which only the solicitude of friendship will discover and remedy, and which would remain forever unheeded in the mighty heap of human calamity, were it only surveyed by the eye of general benevolence, equally attentive to every misery."

charity, and could worthily reason with himself, in the words of a divine before quoted, * "'Tis true he hath wronged me, but unless it were *for conquering wrongs*, what need have I of Christian patience! Where is the meekness of the Christian spirit, if I am hurried away by the same passion with an heathen and infidel!" And might we not suppose that this passage was written by Johnson himself? for it is just what he was accustomed to do: "In the survey of my daily deportment, which I make each night, I drag forth the crime, (impatience, &c.), into the awful presence of an holy God! and there arraigning it of all the *mischiefs* it hath done me, of all the *troubles* it hath given me, and laying before myself seriously and devoutly all the obligations I have to the practice of the contrary virtue, *I condemn it with an holy indignation, I cover myself with shame and sorrow, and renew most solemn resolutions against it, and earnestly beg of God his assistance against his and mine enemy.*" This is the repentant course of a great mind awakened to a just sense of its responsibility; and whoever peruses the holy Meditations and Prayers of Dr. Johnson, can not fail to see that such was the manner of his powerful rebuke of self, and of forming resolutions, dependent on divine support, to conform himself more and more to the will and commands of the Almighty:

> "Safe in His power, whose eyes discern from far
> The secret ambush of a specious prayer:
> Implore His aid, in His decisions rest
> Secure, whate'er He gives, He gives the best."†

"We are brothers," writes Dr. Johnson, ‡ "as we are men; we are again brothers as we are Christians: as men, we are brothers by natural necessity; but as Christians, we are brothers by voluntary choice, and are therefore under an

* Lucas on Holiness, p. 104, sixth edition.

† Johnson's Poems, p. 35; Kearsley, 1785.

‡ In Sermon XI. of "Sermons on different subjects," advertised as written by Dr. Taylor, but clearly of Dr. Johnson's composition. Bishop Porteus and Mr. Croker have no doubt of this. The above sermon has, perhaps, fewer of the characteristics of Johnson's style than some of the others.

apparent obligation to fulfill the relation: first, as it is established by our Creator, and afterward, as it is chosen by ourselves. To have the same opinions naturally produces kindness, even when these opinions have no consequence: because we rejoice to find our sentiments approved by the judgment of another. But those who concur in Christianity, have, by that agreement in principle, an opportunity of more than speculative kindness: they may help forward the salvation of each other, by counsel or by reproof, by exhortation, by example: they may recall each other from deviations, they may excite each other to good works." Good would it be, if there were more of this brotherhood in the Christian Church.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### HIS CHURCHMANSHIP.

Dr. Johnson's religion was that of the Church of England, as set forth in her liturgy, at once reasonable and devotional. His father had been a zealous high Churchman and royalist, and always retained his attachment to the unfortunate family of Stuart, although he reconciled himself, as Boswell tells us, "by casuistical arguments of expediency and necessity, to take the oaths imposed by the prevailing power." We find that in the reign of Queen Anne he was elected a magistrate and brother of the corporation of Lichfield, having taken the oath of allegiance, and that "he believed there was no transubstantiation in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper." This latter he might, consistently with his religious views, apart from his political, have done; for so might Bishop Ken, who strenuously combated the errors of the Roman Catholic religion, and others who continued to be non-jurors: but the oath of allegiance as yet was quite a different subject of consideration. His son, however he admired the character of James the Second, and detested the conduct of William the Third,* was yet a Church and

* William the Third was, nevertheless, in many respects a great man. Certainly, he had little taste for literature, the sciences, wit, and oratory, and he was ever guarded in speech, and famous for secret reserve; yet he was an able politician, and his skill and bravery in war almost unequaled. He was early called into difficult action, therefore his experience had to be learned from his own failures: and this he must have felt, for he once exclaimed, "I would give a good part of my estates to have served a few campaigns under the Prince of Condé, before I had to command against him." Goldsmith hardly does him justice: Macaulay speaks of him as a veritable hero. Of his religious opinions, the latter brilliant historian says, and we must recollect that the Princes of Orange had generally been patrons of the Calvinistic divinity: "He had ruminated on the great enigmas which had been discussed in the synod of Dort, and had found in the austere

King man before the non-jurors became so, who only on the death of the Pretender at Rome (1788) began to pray for the reigning monarch. Boswell records, singularly enough, though certainly late in Johnson's life (1784), that at an agreeable party at Dr. Nowell's, "we drank 'Church and King' after dinner, with *true Tory cordiality*:"* and it is related before, that Dr. Johnson found fault with Archbishop Secker, whose life he said deserved to be recorded, though he differed with him in politics, because the Archbishop in lieu of "Church and King" gave "Constitution in Church

and inflexible logic of the Genevese school something which suited his intellect and temper. The example of intolerance, indeed, which some of his predecessors had set, he never imitated. For all persecution he felt a fixed aversion, which he avowed, not only where the avowal was obviously politic, but on occasions where it seemed that his interest would have been promoted by dissimulation or silence. His theological opinions, however, were even more decided than those of his ancestors. The tenet of predestination was the key-stone of his religion." At this time the Protestants of the United Provinces were divided into two great religious parties, which "almost exactly coincided with two great political parties." The Arminian party were regarded in the light of Papists by the multitude. It is easy to see to which division, both religiously and politically, Dr. Johnson would have belonged. He liked not the doctrine of predestination, and would not argue upon it —perhaps from a dislike to enter conversationally upon a subject so replete with mystery, so above the reason of man, and demanding so much of our reverential awe. It "was a part of the clamor of the times," he said, "so it is mentioned in our Articles, but with as little positiveness as could be." The fullness and wisdom of the 17th Article will strike most persons, and it seems to satisfy the demands of the sensible and judicious of each party.

* George Hardinge, the Welsh Judge, nephew of Lord-Chancellor Camden, calls Johnson "the most avowed and flaming tory of his age," and yet Dr. Johnson wrote the Latin inscription which is at the foot of the picture of the Whig Lord Camden in Guildhall.

Lord Camden was always on the popular side, both at college and in after life. What was said of this great lawyer, might with the utmost fitness be said of our great man of literature, "No man ever breathed who had such an abhorrence of obscenity, or of an improper liberty with sacred names." His lordship was in the constant habit of associating with artists and men of letters, and throughout life he was an eager devourer of romances, in which taste he was joined by Pitt, Fox, Lord Mansfield, Bishop Warburton, Bishop Jebb, and other most eminent personages. See *Lives of the Chancellors*, by Lord Campbell, vol. v. p. 238, &c.

and State :" and on being asked what difference there was between the two toasts, said, "Why, sir, you may be sure *he meant something*." In those and previous days the well established toast of "Church and King," may have embodied the further significancy of "Church and *no Pope*," and hence meant more than the mere expression of loyalty as in the present time. But Johnson, who despised King William, and thought meanly of the first and second Georges, held George the Third in high regard, as "the only king who for almost a century has much appeared to desire, or much endeavored to deserve," the affections of the people: a king who knows not the name of party, and who wishes to be the common father of all his people."*

Dr. Johnson was certainly a Jacobite, and he took delight in talking of Jacobitism, but his zeal wonderfully abated with the advancement of years, and and the absence of a really arousing cause. And Tories and non-jurors, once opposed to the ruling sovereigns and their courts, have more and more continued to acquiesce in the settled change, and become more prominent than the Whigs in their attachment to royalty, as represented by the Hanoverian line, and to the established religion; and somewhat of a revolution must take place ere Dr. Pusey become a Sacheverell ardently backed by the populace; or an Atterbury reveal himself on the episcopal bench; or seven bishops be committed to the Tower for contempt of the regal succession. No, the descendants of the strong opposition party have now become, by easy degrees, the eminently conservative power in Church and State.

And this gradual working went on largely during the reign of George the Third, silently stealing on the mind of Dr. Johnson in common with that of others: for, in the nature of things, there must always be a conservative strength accumulating, and if the Church of England were changed to-morrow from Episcopacy to Presbytery, we should find this same Presbytery, in the course of years, as in the case of Scotland, assuming the conservative principle, and contending against the innovations and agitations of new parties

* The False Alarm, 1770.

arising in opposition to its sway. Little did our reformers imagine that with like feeling as they regarded the Church of Rome, bodies of men would rise up and cordially contemn the result of the operations of their tongues, hands, and lives, even the Reformed Church!

It may be supposed that the year 1745 would have made the blood flow fast, and the pulse beat hopefully in the Jacobite faction: that Balmerino's cry on the scaffold, of "God bless King James," would have stirred into action the minds and bodies of all who in any degree adhered to the cause. And yet Boswell says of Dr. Johnson, "I have heard him declare, that if holding up his right hand would have secured victory at Culloden to Prince Charles's army, *he was not sure he would have held it up:* so little confidence had he in the right claimed by the House of Stuart, and so fearful was he of the consequences of another revolution on the throne of Great Britain." And at another time he said to Mr. Langton, "Nothing has ever offered that has made it worth my while *to consider the question fully.*" He also said to the same, talking of King James the Second, whom he afterward unaccountably calls "a very good king," that "it was become impossible for him to reign any longer in this country." And, so much does the antagonistic spirit of the human mind contribute to the vehemence of maintaining opinions, he was heard to say, "that after the death of a violent Whig, with whom he used to contend with great eagerness, he felt his Toryism much abated." So true is it, that we are half won over, when we cease to care for victory in argument: and that Dr. Johnson knew this to be a certain principle in human nature. We find that once when his friend the Rev. Dr. Taylor commended a physician, and told Johnson how he had to contend in his behalf with persons of the neighborhood, "You should consider, sir," he replied, "that by every one of your victories he is a loser: for every man *of whom you get the better* will be angry and resolve not to employ him: whereas if people get the better of you in argument about him, they'll think, 'We'll send for him, nevertheless.'"  How well would it be if controversial theologians, among Churchmen and Dissenters equally, would

consider the bearing of this anecdote on their many profitless discussions, and we should not see the implacably hostile array of the combatants that we are now compelled to witness, each the more angered, and not convinced to confession, on defeat.

In earlier years, Dr. Johnson had been a more thorough Jacobite.* Once he said to a young lady, "My dear, I

* Dr. Johnson's political principles were attacked by one Joseph Towers; especially, his "Taxation no Tyranny" was handed with severity. Dr. Towers was a Unitarian preacher, a zealous adherent of the Revolution of 1688, a member of the Revolution Society in London, one who approved of the execution of Charles the First, applauded the actors in the French Revolution, held the democratic sentiments of Milton, argued in favor of Locke's liberal philosophy against the accusations of Dean Tucker, opposed the views of Edmund Burke in regard to the revolution in France, and liked neither ecclesiastical establishments nor standing armies. Such a one, we may be sure, could not approve of the principles held by Dr. Johnson. He wrote several tracts and pamphlets; and among these, a "Letter to Dr. Johnson, occasioned by his late Political Publications," and also "An essay on the Life, Character, and Writings of Dr. Johnson." At the commencement of this essay, he trusts too much to sayings related by Mrs. Piozzi, who was by no means worthy of implicit credit; but on the whole, as is usual with Dr. Towers, there is much fairness in his view, as a political adversary, of Dr. Johnson's character; and he always pays the profoundest obeisance to the powers of his mind, and the goodness and piety of his heart. He curiously ends his Essay by saying, "The faults and foibles of Dr. Johnson, whatever they were, are now descended with him to the grave; but his virtues should be the object of our imitation." And yet some of those "faults and foibles" he has endeavored to rescue from the oblivion of the grave!

No one can rise from the perusal of this Essay, without still cherishing a very exalted opinion of Dr. Johnson, as a man of extraordinary intellectual power, and religious conduct. Boswell is pleased with the observation of Dr. Towers, and gives an extract from the Essay. He also says, that although he abhors his Whiggish, democratical propensities, yet that he esteems him as "an ingenious, knowing, and very convivial man."

The Sermons of Dr. Towers were rather moral essays, cold and sensible after the manner of Unitarian writers. It may be remarked, that in a letter written by the Duke de Rochefoucault to Dr. Price, on the occasion of an address from the Revolution Society in London, to the National Assembly in Paris, congratulating them on the French Revolution, this nobleman writes, "The dawn of a glorious day, in which two nations *who had always esteemed each other*, notwithstanding their political divisions and the diversity of their governments, should *con-*

hope you are a Jacobite ?" And on her uncle (the elder Mr. Langton, himself a Tory) remonstrating with him for putting such a question, "Why, sir," he replied, "I meant no offense to your niece, *I meant her a great compliment*. A Jacobite, sir, believes in the divine right of kings. He that believes in the divine right of kings believes in a Divinity. A Jacobite believes in the divine right of bishops. He that believes in the divine right of bishops, believes in the divine authority of the Christian religion. Therefore, sir, a Jacobite is neither an atheist nor a deist. That can not be said of a Whig; for *Whiggism is a negation of all principle*" And yet, according to this harsh definition, Johnson was somewhat of a Whig himself in this matter. Neither was he a steadfast non-juror advocate, although he must have approved of the abstract principle. Once he expressed an opinion that a non-juror would be more criminal in refusing the oaths than in taking them, because the refusal might injure him in his livelihood, and tempt him to crime. Such a mode of reasoning would have come better from Paley than Dr. Johnson, but in this case of submission to the reigning monarch, whatever might have been the original seating of his family on the throne, the doctor seems to have agreed with what Paley has written, who, although giving a strong preference to an *hereditary* rather than an elective monarchy, yet says, "If the house of Lancaster, or even the posterity of Cromwell, had been at this day seated upon the throne of England, we should have been as little concerned to inquire how the founder of the family came there." We may think that Dr. Johnson, and very many other Tories who held opinions identical with his, wisely beheld their "civil obligation resolved into expediency:" and not seeing sufficient cause for opposition or rebellion, cheerfully consented to the laws emanating from the present line of succession, and to the regal succession itself. This could hardly be done

*tract an intimate union*, founded on the *similarity of their opinions*, and their common enthusiasm for liberty." And yet, after all this, England resounded with the fife and drum, arousing her inhabitants of every town and village, and enlisting them in arms against France; and we beheld the long and arduous continental war crowned by the victory of Waterloo!

by one who disliked and abhorred "the tabefaction of all principles;" and we can only ascribe this indifference of Dr. Johnson, coupled with his subsequent receipt of a pension, to a steadily increasing change of opinion: to be less wondered at, when we know he himself had never been in a non-juring meeting-house, and did not think highly of the non-jurors themselves, although there were, doubtlessly, men of the highest character and ability in their ranks.

Only thus briefly glancing at the political hue of Dr. Johnson's churchmanship, let us look more steadily at its devotional and practical interiority. He always seemed to love the church from his heart. On one occasion, when it was told him that himself and a friend usually met at church, "Sir," said he, "it is the best place we can meet in, except heaven, and I hope we shall meet there too." He could not conscientiously enter a Presbyterian place of worship, and when refusing to go and hear Principal Robertson preach, he said, "I will hear him, if he will get up into a tree and preach: but I will not give a sanction, by my presence, to a Presbyterian assembly." We must bear in mind that Dr. Johnson's sanction, was a thing that could not be hid, and often would be construed into a fact of public approval; indeed a mere indulgent act of curiosity, compliance, or carelessness, might be invested with an importance exceedingly annoying to him, and directly adverse to his religious scruples.

When he was in his forty-seventh year he was offered a living by the elder Mr. Langton, if he were inclined to enter into Holy Orders.* But this offer he conscientiously declined. It was situated in a pleasant part of the country, and of tolerable annual income. Moreover, it appears that at this time Johnson was in straitened circumstances,† and his

* It may be said of Johnson, as it was said of Addison by Lord Halifax, when his lordship kept him out of the church—"I believe it is the only injury he will ever do it."—*Bowyer's Memoirs*, p. 65.

† In this year Dr. Johnson was miserably poor. He would have been arrested for debt in February, had not Mr. Richardson bailed him. In the month of March he was under arrest for five pounds eighteen shillings, and was compelled to borrow six guineas of Mr. Richardson. Yet it was a year (1756) of great kindness from him toward others.

London friends had become scattered; but his reason of refusal was cogent: "I have not," he said, "the requisites for the office, *and I can not in conscience shear the flock which I am unable to feed.*" This is related by Sir John Hawkins, and Boswell says, that Johnson felt that his temper and habits rendered him unfit for continual instruction of the vulgar and ignorant, which he held "to be an essential duty in a clergyman;" and moreover, that Johnson's love of a London life rendered the thought of a residence in the country wearisome and lonely. This latter and lower motive may have influenced him in some degree; for we find when he was afterward staying at Langton (the name of the rectory offered him), though he had the privilege of a good library, and saw several of the gentry of the neighborhood, yet that he was fully convinced that he could not have been satisfied with a country living: for, talking of a respectable clergyman in Lincolnshire, the very one, probably, who accepted this living after his refusal, he remarked, "This man, sir, fills up the duties of his life well. I approve of him, but could not imitate him." Yet the prevailing motive was evidently that stated by him to Sir John Hawkins, for we have this noble part of his conversation recorded: "Sir," he said to a friend, a lawyer, who thought a clerical life would have been easier, "Sir, the life of a parson, of a conscientious clergyman, is not easy. I have always considered a clergyman as the father of a larger family than he is able to maintain. *I would rather have chancery suits upon my hands than the cure of souls.* No, sir, I do not envy a clergyman's life

The above facts bring to mind a letter, lately sold in London to Mr. Pocock, which gives evidence of Johnson's poverty in the year 1751.

"Mr. Johnston—Sr, your wife stands endebted to me for the soume of two pounds ever sinces Agust 12th 1749—wh sume I have caled for, and sent after teel Iame ashamed, & as it is such a small afair it cane distres no man to pay it in a weeks time, wh I hope you wil comply with or eles you must excuis me proceeding according to Law in preventing of which you will oblig yrself and humble Servt.

"Will Mitchell.

"Juley 3th, 1751.

"Star, Shandois Street,

"Covt Garden."

[From the *Athenæum* of July 22, 1848.]

as an easy life, nor do I envy the clergyman who makes it an easy life." How would this have pleased good Bishop Burnet, who, in his admirable "Pastoral Care," thus speaks of the studious part of a clergyman's life, in terms so apropos with the above, that they may readily be quoted; "Let any young divine," he says, "go to the chambers of a student in the Inns of Court, and see how many books he must read, and how great a volume of a commonplace book he must make; he will there see through how hard a task one must go in a course of many years, and how ready he must be in all the parts of it, before he is called to the bar, or can manage business. How exact must a physician be in anatomy, in simples, in pharmacy, in the theory of diseases, and in the observations and counsels of doctors, before he can, either with honor or a safe conscience, undertake practice;" and the inference is plain in regard to the "noblest and most important profession of all others," for, as another bishop has said, "It is no slender measure of the knowledge of antiquity, history, philology, that is requisite to qualify a man for such an undertaking." All this would have been more than mastered by Dr. Johnson, but he felt that he had not the necessary love and zeal, and peculiar aptness for a ministry of which Bishop Burnet exclaims, "If St. Paul, after all his visions and labors, after all his raptures and sufferings, yet was inwardly burnt up with the concerns of the church, and labored with much fear and trembling, how much greater apprehensions ought other persons to have of such a trust!"

And yet who could better draw the model of a pastor, or more properly describe what the preaching of the clergy should be, than this Dr. Johnson, who honorably refused to enter on the ministerial office, because of his own presumed unfitness to fulfill the duty in the love of it. His model of a clergyman was the Rev. Zachariah Mudge, Prebendary of Exeter, who, we are told, was idolized in the west of England, both for his excellence as a preacher and the uniform perfect propriety of his private character. After telling of the great and comprehensive nature of his thought and action, his firmness, and general benevolence, and profound learning, Johnson proceeds to say, "His discharge of parochial duties was ex-

emplary. How his sermons were composed, may be learned from the excellent volume which he has given to the public; but how they were delivered can be only known to those who heard them: for, as he appeared in the pulpit, words will not easily describe him. His delivery, though unconstrained, was not negligent, and though forcible, was not turbulent: disdaining anxious nicety of emphasis, and labored artifice of action, it captivated the hearer by its natural dignity: it roused the sluggish and fixed the volatile, and detained the mind upon the subject without directing it to the speaker."

The reader of the above truly Johnsonian paragraph will not fail to mark its judicious antithesis, and concisely learn what should be avoided, and what should be adopted in preaching. The main desideratum is naturalness of manner and of voice—no "labored artifice of action," but "natural dignity"—with the fixing the minds of the hearers on the subject, "without directing to the speaker." Alas! for our spiritual pride and idolatry of intellect, how do all good and humble men crucify that carnal disposition! Well saith Solomon, "For men to search their own glory is not glory;"* and let us all, laity and clergy alike, remember St. Paul's frequent exhortations to lowliness of mind: "Let each esteem other better than themselves." One of the ancient fathers would frequently weep at the applause that was so often accorded to his sermons: "Would to God," he said, "they had rather gone away silent and thoughtful!" "I love a serious preacher," writes Fénélon, "who speaks for my sake, and not for his own; who seeks my salvation, and not his own vain-glory." "The fame of a godly man," says the sainted Baxter, "is as great a snare as the fame of a learned man. And woe to him that takes up with the *fame of godliness*, instead of godliness!" Godly simplicity is the alchemy, as has been said, that converts every thing it touches into gold. "If any man ascend the pulpit," said Kirke White, "with the intention of uttering a fine thing, he is committing a deadly sin." "Ah, why are dust and ashes proud?"† exclaims the Rev. John Newton, in reference to this matter.

* Prov. xxv. 27.

† Why is *earth* and ashes proud?—*Ecclus.* x. 9.

But those who wish to pursue the subject further, and learn true humility of heart in relation to it, should diligently peruse Bishop Burnet's "Pastoral Care," and Cowper's second book of his "Task;" and, after all that can be said and written, we may be pretty sure that earnestness is the grand secret of pulpit and pastoral success; as our poet saith of the young warrior,

> "Wolfe, where'er he fought,
> *Put so much of his heart into his act,*
> That his example had a magnet's force."

Dr. Johnson does not inform us whether this clergyman's preaching was of an extemporaneous nature, but we may, from the evident exactness and sober seriousness of the printed discourses, come to the conclusion that they were previously written in the study. A good sermon is a good sermon, whether written or spoken; and the question whether sermons should be written and read, or be unwritten and spoken without book, should be left to the ability and prudence of ministers, and ever be regarded as a matter of the least importance.

The pen and the tongue may be equally inspired. Wrongly did the Quaker say to Baxter, "You read your sermons out of a paper, *therefore you have not the Spirit!*" And he replied, "It is not want of your abilities that makes ministers use notes, but it is a regard to the work, and good of the hearers. *I use notes as much as any man, when I take pains; and as little as any man, when I am lazy*, or busy, or have not time to prepare. *It is easier for us to preach three sermons without notes, than one with them.*" We can readily understand this in one who has the gift of fluent speech. To such a man, to write a short sermon would be a great labor. It is as one said, who wrote a long, rambling letter to a friend, "If I had more time, I would have written a shorter one." He wrote as he would have spoken; while a shorter epistle would have conveyed fully as much intelligence, but with better arrangement and more perspicuity. Few extemporaneous preachers would like to read their sermons in print, taken down word for word as they were uttered; no, much correction would be necessary; and does not this tell us of the superior inspiration attendant on the pen, rather

than on the tongue? There is much mistake on this subject, especially among the humbler and more ignorant classes of mankind, who look upon an extemporaneous preacher as almost necessarily inspired!* What would such persons think of four, five, or six hours, of eloquent and glowing debate from individual members of the Houses of Parliament? Too often the power of public preaching is put down to inspiration, when it is an intellectual gift simply, and mainly dependent on the force of the natural memory; and while we reason correctly as regards the speeches of political speakers, we believe fanatically concerning the discourses of divines. Often an ill sermon, with a multitude of texts fluently quoted, but wrongly applied will *take* more (it merits no better expression) than a correct and more scriptural discourse. Bishop Stillingfleet complained in his time, "There is got an ill habit of speaking extempore, and a loose and careless way of talking in the pulpit, *which is easy to the preacher, and plausible to less judicious people.*"

Divines differ much on this subject, but, as has been said before, it is quite an unimportant one. Bishop Burnet gives excellent rules for proficiency in both styles of preaching, and

* We may read on all sides of great success attendant on the delivery of written sermons. Of the celebrated Romaine it is recorded: "Although he still adhered to the written sermon, he delivered it with energy and pathos; and great and small bore testimony to the power with which he spake. The Gospel from his mouth appeared to them another Gospel from that which they had heard before. His fame spread; multitudes thronged around him; the church was crowded," &c. &c.—*Memoirs of the Countess of Huntingdon*, vol. i. p. 131.

The excellent observations of Charles Simeon, in regard to extemporaneous prayer, may aptly be applied to extemporaneous preaching: "Now take the prayers," he says, "that are offered on any Sabbath in all places out of the Establishment; have *them all written down, and every expression sifted and scrutinized as our Liturgy has been;* then compare them with the prayers that have been offered in all the churches of the kingdom; and see *what comparison the extemporaneous effusions will bear with our precomposed forms.* Having done this for *one Sabbath*, proceed to do it *for a year;* and then, after a similar examination, compare them again. Were this done, (and done it ought to be in order to form a correct judgment on the case), methinks *there is scarcely a man in the kingdom that would not fall down on his knees and bless God for the Liturgy of the Established Church.*"—*Simeon's Memoirs*, 3d edit. p. 215.

Bishop Mant makes an observation, which, if attended to, would at once reconcile all men to the extemporaneous manner. He says, "Not a sentiment should be conveyed from the pulpit to the mind of the hearer, not an expression should escape the preacher's lip or fall upon the hearer's ear, which could not be justified and maintained in the seclusion of the closet, and in the soberness of private conversation." And he gives a memorable instance in the case of Bishop Hall, so famed for evangelical sweetness: "Never durst I climb," said the bishop, "into the pulpit to preach any sermon, whereof I had not before, in my poor and plain fashion, penned every word in the same order wherein I hoped to deliver it."*

It was said† of Bishop Andrew's sermons, "Few of them but they passed his hand, and were thrice revised before they were preached: and he ever misliked often and loose preaching, without study of antiquity; and he would be bold with himself, and say, "*When he preached twice a day at St. Giles's, he prated once.*" Alas! some light and ignorant minds would best like the prating.

The celebrated Charles Simeon, too, used to read his sermons over and over again, until he could deliver them with great accuracy and ease; and on one occasion the writer

* The same degree of reverence should be made use of in the desk. Dr. Stonehouse (afterward one of the most correct and elegant preachers in the kingdom) once prevailed upon Garrick to go to church with him. After the service, the British Roscius asked the doctor what particular business he had to do when the duty was over? "None," said the other. "I thought you had," said Garrick, "on seeing you enter the reading desk in such a hurry. "Nothing," added he, "can be more indecent than to see a clergyman set about sacred business as if he were a tradesman, and go into the church as if he wanted to get out of it as soon as possible." He next asked the doctor, "What books he had in the desk before him?" "*Only* the Bible and Prayer-book." "*Only* the Bible and Prayer-book!" replied the actor; "why, you tossed them backward and forward, and turned the leaves as carelessly as if they were those of a day-book or ledger."—*Countess of Huntingdon*, vol. i. p. 139. The great secret of reading well is to avoid a mock reverential tone, and to read in the natural voice: especially reading the narrative parts of the Bible as you would read a narrative in any other book, desirous of making it understood.

† By the Bishop of Ely, in the Funeral Sermon of this "painful preacher," p. 21 See Southey's Commonplace Book, p. 343.

recollects his complaint of having been so much engaged as only to have had time to read his sermon over five times previous to delivery. Written sermons are of great antiquity, for even some of the fathers preached from book, and the written sermon is most suited and acceptable to the staid character of the English people, as well as to the more enlightened minds among them; yet it would be well if the extemporaneous manner were also studied, for, if occasionally used with effect, it would go far to disabuse the people of the absurd idea, that the preacher of the written sermon is not inspired; and it would also have other salutary uses. A venerable and exemplary clergyman once said, "I take care to let my people know that I can preach extempore;" and it would be well if the clergy generally took this hint; and we must recollect, that much extemporaneous exhortation is expected from the clergy in visiting their flocks, as well as public speaking in behalf of missionary and other beneficial societies. It might, therefore, be a matter worthy the serious consideration of churchmen, whether the practice of elocution should not form a prominent article in training for the Christian ministry—whether professorships at the Universities, instituted for this purpose, might not be of essential service: and the bishops should think whether they should not give every encouragement to its success, by making it a prime question in the examination of candidates for ordination. With dissenters it is made a *sine quâ non* in relation to entrance on the ministry; and this circumstance of being surely able to address large bodies of men acceptably, must give them, in no mean degree, an advantage; especially since, day by day, oratory is gaining power, and good speakers, who really set free the riches of a full mind, will more readily gain an ascendency for their principles in the hearts of mankind at large.

But to return to our model clergyman. Johnson continues: "The grandeur and solemnity of the preacher did not intrude upon his general behavior; at the table of his friends, he was a companion communicative and attentive, of unaffected manners, of manly cheerfulness, willing to please, and easy to be pleased. His acquaintance was universally

solicited, and his presence obstructed no enjoyment which religion did not forbid. Though studious, he was popular; though argumentative, he was modest; though inflexible, he was candid; though metaphysical, yet orthodox."

Dr. Johnson was a great reader of sermons; he thought they made so considerable a branch of English literature, that any library would be incomplete without a large collection of them; and he was well acquainted with those of Hooker, Atterbury, Tillotson, South, Taylor, Sanderson, Sherlock, Jortin, Seed, Smalridge, Ogden, and many others.

There is one letter of Dr. Johnson's, addressed to a young clergyman (probably the Rev. George Strahan, who was with him in his last illness), so truly valuable to every pastor, that it must be given entire in this place, especially since it contains some golden rules in the composition of sermons. It contains Johnson's maturest judgment on clerical duties, for it bears the date of August 30th, 1780. It runs thus:

"DEAR SIR—Not many days ago, Dr. Lawrence showed me a letter, in which you make mention of me; I hope, therefore, you will not be displeased that I endeavor to preserve your good-will by some observations which your letter suggested to me.

"You are afraid of falling into some improprieties in the daily service, by reading to an audience that requires no exactness. Your fear, I hope, secures you from danger. They who contract absurd habits are such as have no fear. It is impossible to do the same thing very often without some peculiarity of manner; but that manner may be good or bad, and a little care will at least preserve it from being bad; to make it good, there must, I think, be something of natural or casual felicity, which can not be taught.

"Your present method of making your sermons seems very judicious. Few frequent preachers can be supposed to have sermons more their own than yours will be. Take care to register, somewhere or other, the authors from whom your several discourses are borrowed: and do not imagine that you shall always remember even what, perhaps you now think it impossible to forget.

"My advice, however, is, that you attempt, from time to time, an original sermon; and in the labor of composition, do not burden your mind with too much at once; do not exact from yourself at one effort of excogitation propriety of thought and elegance of expression. Invent first, and then embellish. The production of something, where nothing was before, is an act of greater energy than the expansion or decoration of the thing produced. Set down diligently your thoughts as they rise, in the first words that occur; and when you have matter, you will easily give it form; nor, perhaps, will this method be always necessary, for, by habit, your thoughts and diction will flow together.

"The composition of sermons is not very difficult; the divisions not only help the memory of the hearer, but direct the judgment of the writer; they supply sources of invention, and keep every part in its proper place."

Dr. Johnson's advice to young clergymen on the composition of sermons, is just that of the most judicious divines, as given in their several charges and instructions to the clergy. Burnet would much rather recommend the using other men's sermons, than the making any of their own, where they are not masters of the body of Divinity, and of the Scriptures. He thinks it an unreasonable piece of vanity for men to offer their own crudities, when such excellent discourses are to be obtained in print: at the same time he hopes, that from copying good models, ere long they may "be able to go without such crutches, and to work without patterns." Bishop Bull also advises young ministers not at first to trust to their own compositions, but to furnish themselves with a store of the best sermons that have been published by the learned divines of the Church, with the view of ultimately attaining to a good habit of writing themselves. On the other hand, Bishop Sprat (1695) commences a charge with an admonition, which he declares *he is almost ashamed to give:* "The caution," to use his exact words, "in plain terms, is this; that *every person* who undertakes this great employment, should make it a matter of religion and conscience, to *preach nothing but what is the product of his own study, and of*

*his own composing.*" George Herbert says, "Though the world is full of such composures" (excellent sermons), "yet *every man's own is fittest, readiest, and most savory to him.*" Bishop Mant strongly recommends the clergy, for several sufficient reasons, to practice the composition of sermons, as most advantageous to themselves, and to those to whom they preach. "The country parson," writes Herbert, "preacheth constantly; the pulpit is his joy and his throne;" and hardly could this delight be consistent with other than preaching his own discourses. And again, the complexion of the sermon suiteth; for, he says, "the character of his sermon is holiness; he is not witty, or learned, or eloquent, but holy." On the whole, although no minister should in this case peremptorily deny himself the aid and use of other men's discourses, yet we may think it most necessary that he should exercise his own abilities in carrying out his ordination vow, to "teach the people committed to his care and charge;" and although at first he may advisedly desire help, and his own modesty may influence him in this, yet, if there be no prospect of his being able to do these things of himself—if neither his own love of composition, nor his possession of abilities, urge him—then we may very reasonably ask, What business has he in the ministerial office at all, seeing that preaching is a principal part of it? Is he always to be an indolent copyist, a mere retailer of other men's goods; a sapless, lifeless tree in regard to this spiritual bearing of fruit? Surely all our noble divines would condemn such a man in such a course; the people at large would discern his incapacity and unfaithfulness; and, most of all, would the man, if any right feeling be in him, utterly, however secretly, condemn himself: for in no other profession would such a course be tolerated, or be honorably undertaken.

Dr. Johnson proceeds in his admirable letter:

"What I like least in your letter is your account of the manners of your parish; from which I gather, that it has been long neglected by the parson. The Dean of Carlisle (Dr. Percy), who was then a little rector in Northamptonshire, told me, that it might be discerned whether or no there

was a clergyman resident in a parish, by the civil or savage manner of the people. Such a congregation as yours stands in need of much reformation, and I would not have you think it impossible to reform them. A very savage parish was civilized by a decayed gentlewoman, who came among them to teach a petty school. My learned friend, Dr. Wheeler, of Oxford, when he was a young man, had the care of a neighboring parish for fifteen pounds a year, which he was never paid; but he counted it a convenience, that it compelled him to make a sermon weekly. One woman he could not bring to the communion; and when he reproved or exhorted her, she only answered, that she was no scholar. He was advised to set some good woman or man of the parish, a little wiser than herself, to talk to her in a language level to her mind. Such honest, I may call them holy artifices, must be practiced by every clergyman, *for all means must be tried by which souls may be saved.* Talk to your people, however, as much as you can; and you will find, that the more frequently you converse with them upon religious subjects, the more willingly they will attend, and the more submissively they will learn. *A clergyman's diligence always makes him venerable.* I think I have now only to say, that, in the momentous work you have undertaken, I pray God to bless you.

"I am, sir, &c.,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

In reading the above, we think of Hannah More and her schools at Mendip, albeit she was no decayed gentlewoman; and the "holy artifice" brings to our minds the "catching with guile" of St Paul.* And what is of more service than a continued system of parochial visiting? what wins the hearts of the poor more? what better than a grave and judicious talking to the people? not religious gossip—not cant—not light observations—but sober and reasonable discourse, warning, rebuking, instructing, comforting. The poor treasure up the sayings of their minister, and a word in season may be worth many sermons, which persons take not to themselves:

* 1 Cor. xii. 16.

and well do I remember the praise which a farmer accorded to an active and pious country clergyman: "Sir," said he, "that was the first gentleman that ever came and talked with us, and he would walk by the side of the men when at plow, speaking to them on the welfare of their souls. He has always been the same man, and so we all love him." This was spoken of an aged pastor, of one who had ministered in the same parish for upward of forty years—the same good man all the while, whose motto might well have been taken from Johnson, "Talk to your people." Happy are those clergymen who can exercise the privilege of talking to all their people; for, alas! our church too often places one man amid thousands, and still expects his ministry to be not only sufficient, but successful. Rightly did Dr. Johnson remark, "That a London parish was a very comfortless thing, for the clergyman seldom knew the face of one out of ten of his parishioners;" and what would he now say to the cases which the large manufacturing towns present?

It may be mentioned, that he was a great advocate of plain preaching, and thought that the established clergy did not preach plain enough; for "polished periods and glittering sentences flew over the heads of the common people without any impression upon their hearts." He thought the adoption of a plain and familiar style, the only way of doing good to the common people, and which "clergymen of genius and learning ought to do from a principle of duty, when it is suited to their congregations: a practice for which they will be praised by men of sense." And thus, for example, "to insist against drunkenness as a crime, because it debases reason, the noblest faculty of man, would be of no service to the common people; but to tell them they may die in a fit of drunkenness, and show them how dreadful that would be, can not fail to make a deep impression;" of course, backed by the awful truth, that *a drunkard can not inherit the kingdom of God.* And he added, to Boswell, "Sir, when your Scotch clergy give up their homely manner, religion will soon decay in that country."

In looking on the above remarks, we must recollect that Johnson is speaking in a less educated age than the present;

an age prolific of more great men, but in which knowledge was not so generally diffused. He thought that the Methodists had the advantage in plain speaking, but now we find the Methodist preacher to be lagging in the rear of the schoolmaster, and that a more educated flock requires a higher tone of preaching, and would be more capable of appreciating the more refined style of argument, as rejected by Johnson in the case of drunkenness. Baxter, we are told, always contrived that some part of his sermon should be above the comprehension of the mass of his hearers. On the other hand, Bishop Burnet says, "A preacher is to fancy himself as in the room of the most unlearned man in his whole parish." There is a way, however, of making the same discourse perfectly acceptable both to rich and poor, learned and unlearned; and, indeed, the rich and learned often most loathe fine sermons. It is said that the present rector of St. Giles's (the Rev. J. Endell Tyler) was presented to that preferment by the late Lord Liverpool, when Prime Minister, because he was a plain and instructive preacher: his lordship intimating that his time was so occupied, that when he went to church, he wished not to sit and listen to argumentative and learned discourses, but to be informed, as clearly as possible, on all the leading essentials, both in faith and practice, of our most holy religion. Many a fine preacher displayed his eloquence before the Prime Minister of the Crown, but the plain one succeeded in best winning his approbation and regard.

Johnson was a great supporter of the liberty of the pulpit, and his defense of the Rev. James Thompson, minister of Dunfermline, will amply reward perusal. When it was read to Burke, he was highly pleased, and exclaimed, "Well, he does his work in a workman-like manner." The counsel of Jeremy Taylor may generally be the best to be observed: "Spare no man's sin, but meddle with no man's person; neither name any man, or make him to be suspected—he that doth otherwise, makes his sermon to be a libel;" and Dr. Johnson argues, "A minister who has in his congregation a man of open and scandalous wickedness, may warn his parishioners to shun his conversation. To warn them is not

only lawful, but not to warn them would be criminal. He may warn them one by one in friendly converse, or by a parochial visitation. But if he may warn each man singly, what should forbid him to warn them all together? . . . . . And of a sudden and solemn publication the impression is deeper, and the warning more effectual." Hear an Apostle: *Them that sin* (probably signifying the people* rather than the presbyters, of whom he was speaking) *rebuke before all, that others also may fear;* and Titus also was to *rebuke* all classes of the people *with all authority:* certainly the former text carries with it a personal application.

We have seen Johnson deliberately refusing to undertake the ministerial office, when offered to him under tempting circumstances; and we have seen that he understood well the nature of a clergyman's duties. In other ways in allusion to clerical conduct, we find him making admirable observations. On one occasion, some clergymen in his company carried convivial joviality to excess, thinking all the while that he would be entertained. But Johnson sat silent and grave for some time: at last, turning to Beauclerk, he said, *by no means in a whisper*, "This merriment of parsons is mighty offensive." Sir Walter Scott tells us of a minister, who held a high character as a leader of the strict and rigid Presbyterian party in the Church of Scotland, yet was remarkable for the way he shone in convivial society. "He was ever gay amid the gayest:" when it once occurred to some one present to ask, what one of his elders would think, should he see his pastor in such a merry mood. "Think," replied the doctor; "why, he would not believe his own eyes."

In the case of "believing one's own eyes," refinedly called "ocular demonstration," there is an anecdote told of the late Rev. Rowland Hill. Late on one evening he ordered his carriage, and bade his coachman drive him to Drury-lane

* 1 Tim. v. 20. "It is not agreed," observes Bloomfield, "whether the *presbyters*, or the *people at large*, are here to be understood. The context favors the *former* view; but the air of the sentence, and the change of number, rather require the latter." *Notes on the Greek Testament*, by the Rev. S. T. Bloomfield, D. D., F. S. A., vol. ii. p. 427.

theatre. The man stared, hesitated, thought his master mad; but "To *the theatre!*" was the authoritative command. Down he was set at the theatre, and, to his coachman's utter bewilderment, purchased a ticket, and walked in. Rowland Hill entered a box, fixed his eyes sternly on its occupant, exclaiming, "Oh, you are there, are you!" and abruptly quitting the theatre, drove home. The poor and almost petrified occupant was a preacher at his own chapel, who had been reported to him as a frequenter of the theatre, but which report he would not credit, until "seeing was believing" to him.

That the rebuker should have clean hands is an important consideration in the value of a rebuke. In the above case we may imagine it was indeed withering! But a story is told in a hunting county, in which a clergyman delivered himself by his ready wit. A venerable archdeacon, who had heard of this clergyman's hunting propensities, sent for him to lecture him on the subject. Soundly did he administer his rebuke, long was he about it, while his poor victim spake not a word in his defense. Suddenly the archdeacon perceiving a smile on the culprit's countenance, said, "Ah! I see my admonition has little effect upon you: alas! you too much resemble Gallio in the Scriptures, who cared not for these things." Now was the climax; and the expected penitent, drawing himself up to his full height, and fixing a wickedly merry eye on his reverend elder, replied, "Mr. Archdeacon, I have heard you with patience: you may have rebuked me rightly, and I may be a Gallio; but this I have to say, that if I am a Gallio, your son Richard is a Tally-ho; and so, Mr. Archdeacon, I wish you a very good morning." The son Richard was a noted clerical fox-hunter!

Nevertheless, a sporting parson is an abomination, and, let us hope, nearly an extinct one. Let a clergyman be given to sporting, or let his "talk be of bullocks," and every one feels that he is out of his proper element: for to him, with what propriety may

"The master of the pack
Cry, 'Well done, saint!' and clap him on the back."*

* Cowper.

No sermons that he may preach, no amount of alms that he may give, no moral rectitude in temporal things, will ever lead the people (however they may partially disguise it in his presence) to look upon him with reverence, or to regard and love him in their hearts as a pastor that is doing his duty to the church, and is sufficiently not minding earthly things. If such a one would considerately listen to the poorer members of the flock honestly and reasonably speaking their minds in this matter, he would neither mount the hunter nor carry the gun for one hour more; for, if he had a heart, such comments would subdue its love of that which prevents his spiritual visitings of the sick, the ignorant, and the afflicted, and makes more dissenters from the Apostolic church than any other cause. Bishop Mant, and many other prelates, have loudly spoken against it; and all may ask, With what propriety can a clergyman enter a cottage to pray with its afflicted inhabitant, and leave his gun and dogs at the door, or stop in the exciting career of a fox-hunting chase? It is perfectly true, there is no sin in either of these amusements, if the sin of cruelty can be separated from them; but as Bishop Gibson observes, "the laws of the church have in all ages restrained clergymen from many freedoms and diversions, which in others are accounted allowable and innocent; being such exercises as are too eager and violent, and therefore unagreeable to that sedateness and gravity which becomes our functions," &c. Johnson used to say, that the reason a man found pleasure in hunting was, because he "feels his own vacuity less in action than when at rest;" but surely a well disciplined and cultivated mind never knows what vacuity is, and would least of all resort, for its cure, to violent locomotion of the body. Sir Joshua Reynolds observed, that "the real character of a man was found out by his amusements." Boswell makes a good remark, to the effect, that if the clergy knew how much an indiscriminate mixing in the pleasures of society "lessens them in the eyes of those whom they think to please by it, they would feel themselves much mortified."

Dr. Johnson always thought that a due solemnity and

propriety of manner was to be expected from bishops, and a corresponding respect paid to their office and venerable character.* It would not be immoral in a bishop, he said, "to whip a top in Grosvenor-square; but, if he did, I hope the boys would fall upon him, and apply the whip to *him*. There are gradations in conduct; there is morality, decency, propriety. None of these should be violated by a bishop." He also disapproved of bishops giving dinners during Passion-week, or going to routs; at least, of their staying at these latter longer than their presence commanded respect. In talking on this point, Boswell happily observed, "When a bishop places himself in a situation where he has no distinct character, and is of no consequence, he degrades the dignity of his order:" on which Johnson remarked to Mrs. Thrale, "Mr. Boswell, madam, has said it as correctly as it could be." Not only in the dignitaries of the church, but in the clergy generally, Dr. Johnson looked for a particular decorum and delicacy of behavior, with more seriousness than others of mankind, and a suitable composure of manners. At the same time, it must be told to the laity, that there is not a higher standard laid down in the Scriptures for the clergy than for themselves; and the good pattern of ministers is not one which they are to look upon and admire only, but to follow.

* How truly does the celebrated Cheshire petition, presented by Sir Thomas Ashton in the House of Lords commence; "When we consider that bishops were instituted *in the times of the Apostles;* that they were *the great lights* of the church in all the first General Councils; that so many of them sowed the seeds of religion *in their blood*, and rescued Christianity from *utter extirpation* in the primitive heathen persecutions; that to them we owe the redemption of *the purity of the Gospel* we now profess from *Romish corruption;* that many of them, for the propagation of the truth, *became such glorious martyrs.*" &c. &c.; to pray the present removal of them we can not conceive to relish of justice or charity, nor can we join with them."—*Nalson*, vol. ii. p. 759. From Southey's *Commonplace Book*, p. 39.

The petitioners go on to the state, that in lieu of *twenty-six Ordinaries*, "easily responsible to parliaments," they fear to become exposed to the "mere arbitrary government of a numerous Presbytery, who, together with their Ruling Elders, will arise to nearly *forty thousand Church governors.*"

## CHAPTER IX.

### HIS CHURCHMANSHIP.

Other points in Dr. Johnson's churchmanship demand our attention. It is certain, that the Scriptures invest places erected for the worship of the Supreme Being with a peculiar sacredness. No one can read the eighth chapter of the first Book of Kings, and also think of the Shechinah, and not acknowledge this. It is proper, too, that our churches should be built after a peculiar pattern in architecture, and manifest by their outward and inward appearance that they are set apart for the duties of religion only. They should also be made more comfortable, so that the cold and dampness may not be inconvenient to the body when engaged in devotion, especially to feeble or aged persons. Perhaps it would be highly advantageous, if popular prejudice would so far relax as to allow pictures to reappear on the walls of our churches; we have them in the windows, why not on the walls? Great instruction is derived from pictures; we teach children by them; we can in many things more readily give an adult an idea of a building, a man, a scene, by showing him a picture, than by using thousands of words. We have sacred pictures in our houses, and we worship them not; can it for a moment be imagined that they would be worshiped in churches? Are we not afraid, where no fear is? alarmed at a shadow, a senseless echo, a nonentity? Suppose the richer of the laity would transfer some of their beautiful pictures from the walls of their mansions to those of the church, (and in this we should have the sanction of Luther), not only would churches become the conservatories of the best specimens of the art of painting, as well as of architecture or sculpture, but the people would reap the advantage of having their churches made more comfortable, inasmuch as the

church must be kept aired and dry for the sake of the preservation of the pictures: churches would not then be left to the tender mercies and tastes of churchwardens. Yet, with the cherished idea of a church as a place of peculiar sanctity, and to be adorned with every decent allurement to devotion, we need not object to Dr. Johnson's reasoning, when he says, "We may allow fancy to suggest certain ideas in certain places, but reason must always be heard, when she tells us, that those ideas and those places have no natural or necessary relation. When we enter a church, *we habitually recall to mind the duty of adoration, but we must not omit adoration for want of a temple;* because we know, and ought to remember, that the universal Lord is every where present; and that, therefore, to come to Iona, or to Jerusalem, *though it may be useful, can not be necessary.*"

How wise is this; what a happy moderation on a matter which runs away with weak or superstitious minds! We need not be of those who would be followers of Mrs. Adams, when she told Parson Adams that religion should not be talked of out of church; yet, if we can ornament a church, and by doing so produce a substantial benefit, we ought at once to consider how it can be worthily accomplished. Dr. Johnson loved to cherish a feeling of veneration. "I look," he said, "with reverence upon every place that has been set apart for religion," although he spake of a chapel in ruins; and he kept off his hat while he was within its walls. Nor may this feeling be without its practical effect, for, after having visited the cathedral on the island of Icolmkill, Boswell, who was a Presbyterian, writes, "I hoped that ever after having been in this holy place, I should maintain an exemplary conduct."

Dr. Johnson thought it proper to observe the holy days of the church. Some one having objected to the "observance of days, and months, and years" (Gal. iv. 10, signifying Jewish days, months, &c., παρατηρεῖσθε, *superstitiously* observe), he answered, "The church does not superstitiously observe days, merely as days, but as memorials of important facts." At another time he remarked to Boswell, "Sir, the holy-days observed by our church are of great use in religion."

So thought Patrick, Hooker, Taylor,* Hammond, Tillotson, and other pious divines of the Church of England.

Let us ponder a little on this subject. The number of the holy-days of the Church of England is not grievous. The political economist need not dread their usurpation on the labors which build up his mammon. They are not those alluded to by Bishop Horsley in the ordinance of Bishop Niger, as ratified by Nicholas the Fifth (in the reign of Henry the Sixth), after the interpretation by Archbishop Arundel and Innocent the Seventh—neither in the former provincial constitution of Archbishop Islip—but simply and only *those days which have peculiar reference to our Lord himself, to the Holy Spirit, and to Apostles and Evangelists.* These, which include Christmas Day, Ash Wednesday, Good Friday, Easter Monday and Tuesday, and Whit-Monday and Tuesday, will be just thirty days in the year, and in every year some of these holy-days will occur on the Sunday. We speak of the Saints' days of the church, but it must be recollected that it is only of the New Testament saints that we speak; and, certainly, if persons would attend the church service, and listen to the appropriate lessons, they would gain such a knowledge of these scriptural patterns, as would be, in Johnson's words, "of great use in religion." Well do our people know that the Saint above all saints is JESUS CHRIST, and that all the holy saints put together have but touched the hem of his garment! yet, he who despises an earthly saint, will surely never have honored Christ, because he who despises a lesser degree of any thing, must confessedly despise the greater. If a man love the Lord Jesus, he will love the genuine light of the Lord, wherever it may be seen, and thus will love the least of the saints, as showing forth even a spark of the radiance of the Saint of saints; and how much more will he love to hear of those whose lives are bound up with the life of our blessed Lord!

There are some other days which can not be called, strictly, Saints' days or Festivals of the church, because they are only locally observed—the wakes, or feast-days, of the differ-

* See Rules and Advices to the Clergy, by Jeremy Taylor.

ent parishes. The true account of their origin may be best derived from Dugdale;* and it appears, in regard (according to heathen custom) that many oxen used to be sacrificed to devils, some solemnity (on the introduction of Christianity) ought to be allowed in lieu thereof; and on the day of the dedication, or festivals of those saints whose relics were placed there, they were to set up tents about the temples converted into churches, and celebrate the solemnity with religious feasting, so that beasts should not be sacrificed to the devil, *but slain to be eaten*, praising God. This is the plain institution of wakes, which, at one time, were eminently religious services, but now universally abused in their observance. Of holy-days in general, as days of leisure and recreation, there is great difference of opinion; and we must all allow that a holy-day, to be a blessing, and not a curse, must be well superintended and well spent. "They reproach the Catholic religion," writes Southey, "with the number of its holy-days, never considering how the want of holy-days breaks down and brutalizes the laboring class, *and that where they occur seldom, they are uniformly abused;*" and Lord John Manners, a vigorous supporter of the recreations of the poorer classes, says, "The abuse springs from the non-use." On the other hand, we find these holy-days turned to evil purposes when the using of them was frequent. Prior to the Reformation we find the Abbot of Ely and his clergy going forth, in regard to these festivals, to exhort the people "to pray devoutly, and not betake themselves to drinking and debauchery." Bishop Patrick alludes, in quotation from one of the Fathers, to men getting drunk on the tomb-stones of the saints. And by an Act of Convocation, passed by Henry the Eighth, in the year 1536, their numbers were diminished, the feast of every church being ordered to be kept upon one and the same day every where: this Act was repealed in the time of Charles the First, and wakes were further encouraged by Charles the Second. It is certain there is no improvement in them now; neither, as yet, can an Englishman, generally speaking, keep a holy-day of any kind in a

* Letter from Pope Gregory to Mellitus, Bishop of London. Dugdale's Monasticon, vol. ii. p. 323.

rational manner: the doing so must be the work of time, and brought about by the fruits of education.

But this, like too many other matters, is made a money question. Wages are so scantly given, that the laborer does not desire the keeping of a holy-day, unless his wages are continued to him. Formerly an Act of Parliament was passed (6th Henry VI.) to order this. Where laborers are hired by the year, they should be treated as servants of the year, and not of the day: but many are hired only by the week or day, and in these cases it would be difficult, by a legislative enactment, to guard the poor man. This shows more and more, that before the holy-days of the church, can be universally kept, there must be a liberal and pious spirit abroad; and the farmer's pride should be, to see his laborers more contented, more grateful, and more cheerfully working on their days of work, through having a day of change and leisure allowed them, somewhat more than one day in seven gives them.

The incapability of rightly observing holy-days certainly argues a depravity of manners. These pious days, as well as the sacred seasons of Christmas, Easter, and Whitsuntide, have been miserably perverted from the sacred intention of the primitive institutions, while the other saints' days in the Calendar have been allowed to pass by in cold indifference and utter neglect. Surely national and individual piety has been sorely wounded by such a course, and much devotional feeling and sacred affection gone away from the once warmer and kinder hearts and minds of the community at large. It is gratifying that the church still keeps up her festivals and saints' days in great degree; and if old John Chrysostom were to walk into one of our parish churches on Christmas-day, he would still find this "metropolis of days," as he called it, kept, as in his own time, with prayer, sermon, and sacrament: and though he would be among the present Christians something like Caractacus among modern Britons, yet he would probably find much that would gratify his mind and rejoice his heart.

But if we can not obtain days of recreation for the humbler classes, when squire and laborer may, at least in rural dis-

tricts, mingle harmlessly together, the former maintaining such a character as our poet Wordsworth writes of one in time past,

> "Rich in love
> And sweet humanity, he was himself
> To the degree that he desired, beloved,"

still, may not leave to attend on the services of the church be obtained? In good George Herbert's days we learn that the plowmen, on hearing the tinkle of his church bell, used to tie up their horses, and proceed at once to prayers in his church. And may it not be offered as a suggestion, whether it would not be desirable that the church should order special prayers for such days, different to those used on Sundays? and indeed, we may enlarge the question, and ask whether it would not be desirable that there should be different prayers for every day in the week—specially with a growing desire to carry into practice the church's theory of daily prayer? Some persons may be alarmed at the idea of such change, and ask, Are not our wants every day the same, and to be satisfied by the same petitions? are not our prayers excellent? Yes, this may be true, but we must recollect that sameness is not pleasing to the human mind: and that a bad effect is likely to be produced on minister and people by the daily repetition of the same prayers; for they will probably lose their effect, and lead to formality. We may greatly admire one of Shakspeare's nobler plays, and yet if that same play were read to us every day, we should become wearied in the hearing of it. And what beautiful and fervent prayers might the church select from the ancient times! and with this advantage, that many of them might be so arranged as to be serviceable for domestic as well as public use; and this is a want which the American Book of Common Prayer does not overlook. Let us hope these things may meet with attention in the higher quarters: and, meanwhile, let us be thankful, that the regret of the Scotch Presbyterian Boswell need not be ours, when he observes, "I am sorry to have it to say, that Scotland is the only country, Catholic or Protestant, where the great events of our religion are not solemnly commemorated by its ecclesiastical Establishment on days set apart for the purpose."

Johnson observed the days of Passion Week with much humility and reverence, always fasting strictly on Good Friday. His remarks on the solemn nature of this period of the year given in the "Rambler," will be well remembered by those who have once perused them. There was a time in his literary life, when he was compelled to fast through poverty, passing two days at a time without any solid food.

Boswell once said to him, as an instance of the strange opinions some persons would ascribe to him, "David Hume told me, you said that you would stand before a battery of cannon to restore the Convocation to its full powers." With a determined look, he thundered forth, "And would I not, sir? Shall the Presbyterian *kirk* of Scotland have its General Assembly, and the Church of England be denied its Convocation?" Boswell calls this, but why we may hardly discern, an explosion of high-church zeal: at all events, at the present time what may be designated the low-church party would probably prevail in Convocation.

The Church of Scotland certainly has its General Assembly: the Episcopal Church in America, because separated from the state, necessarily has its Convention: the Wesleyans in England hold their Conference, and on most absolute terms: other bodies of dissenters are governed by something analogous—but still (and be it spoken with all deference to an opposite opinion of others), it is not advisable that the Church of England, and mainly on account of her power, should be allowed to revive her Convocation. It must be remembered that the bishops, in mixing with the laity in the Upper House of Parliament, are following the more ancient system, when in the Grand Council of the nation, the Witenagemote, met earls and thanes, bishops and mitred abbots: and that at a much later period divines sat in a separate house, and thus commenced Convocation. It was in the year 1725 that Convocation was discontinued, at a time when much venality, corruption, avarice, and profligacy marked the times; and hence it was disagreeable to the government that the morals of the people should be inspected, and decency and dignity in the church too rigidly maintained. Their disputes in controversial and other matters were assigned as the cause

of this authoritative measure: and if so, it were well; for we can hardly agree with the historian,* that "nothing can be more impolitic in a state than to hinder the clergy from disputing with each other;" and that, "if religion be not kept awake by opposition, it sinks into silence, and no longer continues an object of public concern." On the contrary, much infidelity, and much immorality, are the consequence of the miserable divisions and disputes in the religious community; and religion is most at its height, most attractive and most powerful, in proportion as peace and love bear sway in public assemblies, and in the private conduct of individuals. It was so in the first centuries of the Christian church, when no secession from the one and entire body of Christians was known: and when the heathen world exclaimed, "See how these Christians love one another!" We must recollect that Convocation now would be a different matter to what it has hitherto been, inasmuch as multitudes of persons can read who before could not; the means of conveying intelligence are multiplied; and thus a whole nation would be standing on tiptoe to learn every word spoken in the Houses, where before but a portion of it could know any thing about it. Of course, newspapers would be established for the purpose of making every speech and matter public, and probably the debates in Convocation would exceed in interest the debates in Parliament: while a love of taking one side or another in exciting controversial topics would rather tend to place in the background the humble practice of true religion. We may be sure such a stir would arise in the church as would add greatly to her convenience or inconvenience: most probably to the latter, and, therefore, it may be best to continue the church under the guidance of the state, that is, in the power of the laity as elected by the people. Still, it is a very grave question, whether dissenting members of Parliament should (or could conscientiously) vote on matters affecting the church, because the church should be governed by churchmen: and, at all events, the state should forbear to act in a tyrannical and overbearing spirit toward the church, so long as she consents to place her affairs so much under its rules, and declines

* Goldsmith, vol. iv. p. 263.

the voice of a separate assembly to express or conduct the administration of her affairs, she seems by so doing to seek peace in preference to power.

But, say many, We want discipline in the church. Well, the state has given you much discipline, especially of late, through Acts of Parliament; and recollect that laity and clergy combined are the church. Yes, but still, they say, the church wants the power of excommunication left her by her Lord (John xx. 22, 23), and exercised by Apostles and the Primitive Church; for since the church is really a society, and yet has none of that outward coercive power wherewith the civil magistrate enforces his laws, it is fit she should have something in lieu of it, whereby her members might *either be kept to rule*, or *else be disowned by her*, and excluded from all further correspondence or communion with her. Reason alone will suggest, that the church, as a society instituted by Christ, should have the powers necessary to her support and government; that she should have somewhat wherewith to keep her members within the rules and orders of her Founder. For it were absurd to suppose of so wise a Founder, that He should have left her in such a naked and destitute condition as to have no rules of government, no bands of union between her members, no common ligaments wherewith to keep the body compact, and to preserve it in health and vigor.* Beyond all dispute the church has scriptural authority for the enforcement of discipline; it is a legacy left to the church by Christ himself.† And noble is St. Cyprian's praise of the exercise of discipline, when he ascribes to it the "preservation of our faith and hope: our guidance to heaven: the increase of all good dispositions in us: the support of all virtue: our abiding in God and Christ, and our partaking at last of their blessed promises." Well might he add, that "to adhere to it was beneficial: and to despise, or neglect it, fatal."

No one can deny that the bishops of our church are enabled to exercise much authoritative discipline in gross cases of wrong teaching or example, and in relation to moral con-

* Marshall on the Penitential Discipline of the Church.

† See Bishop Jewell's *Apology of the Church of England*, on the meaning of "binding" and "loosing," p. 23–27.

duct, in the case of the clergy. But the popular cry is, that persons of the laity call themselves members of the church, and are even communicants, and yet of unholy lives. Well, the rubric provides for such cases as this latter, although we certainly want a correct definition given of the persons to whom the sacrament of the Lord's Supper is to be refused. The revival of such discipline is "too weighty for the shoulders of any private priest," and, moreover, he might be charged with pique or personal dislike. At present, it is rather the custom of the clergy, when they see any reprobate persons intending to partake of the Sacrament, to send them a private note, or confidential message, and thus kindly warn them. Yet a great object of all discipline is missed by this private proceeding. Happy is it when a man's conscience can decide the matter for him, as Clemens Alexandrinus rather advises that the people should be left to it in this momentous concern: "Some," he says, in commendation rather of the practice, "after the customary division of the Eucharistical elements, leave it upon the conscience of their people whether they will take their part or not. And the best rule to determine them, in their participation or forbearance," he observes to be "their own conscience; as the surest foundation for conscience to proceed upon in this matter was a good life, joined with a suitable measure of proficiency in the knowledge of the Gospel."* But the boldly speaking St. Chrysostom, a kind of Latimer in such respects, tells the clergy, that "it is no small penalty which they shall incur, if they suffer any to partake of the Holy Table, whom they know to be guilty of deadly sin; and that the *blood of such shall be required at their hands;* that therefore, *if any general of an army, or a consul, or even the emperor himself should offer to approach under such circumstances, they were boldly to oppose his admission, as being vested for such purposes with a power superior to any earthly potentate's.*"† After all, public opinion must be prepared to second the enforcement of discipline, or it would much lose its effect: and dissenters,

* Clem. Alexand. Stromat. lib. i. vol. i. p. 318.

† Chrysostom in Matt. xxvi. Homily, No. 83, vol. vii. p. 789. Ed. Bened.

who would too readily take into their communion the banished ones from the church, should not be forward to cry out for that which they really in great measure prevent. "The absence of discipline," writes Dr. Arnold, "is a most grievous evil; and there is no doubt that although it must be vain *when opposed to public opinion*, yet, when it is the expression of that opinion, there is nothing which it can not achieve. But," he adds, "public opinion can not enforce church discipline now, because that discipline would not be now the expression of the voice of the church, but simply of a small part of the church, of the clergy only."* The church is probably aware of the necessity of having public opinion with her, and not being able yet to obtain it on this point; for she still lays herself open to the old taunt of much wishing a certain species of discipline† to be restored, and yet of making no endeavor to obtain it.

"Is not the expression in the Burial Service," asked Boswell, "in the *sure* and *certain* hope of a (*blessed*) resurrection, too strong to be used indiscriminately, and indeed, sometimes, when those over whose bodies it is said have been notoriously profane?" Johnson replied, "It is sure and certain *hope*, sir, not *belief*." "I did not," adds Boswell, "insist further; but can not help thinking that *less positive words* would be more proper."

It must be observed that Boswell has interpolated the word "blessed," and also omitted the article, *the* resurrection; an alteration since the time of King Edward the Sixth's first Prayer Book, and certainly one of importance. The expression afterward, "*our* vile bodies," also takes away the individual application. Still, notwithstanding the efforts of commentators, and what Boswell calls a "satisfactory" one by the Rev. Ralph Churton, whose interpretation of the words "eternal life" is *un*satisfactory, the intention of the church seems to be, in the first place, to render the words applicable to the identical deceased whose corpse is being interred, although, on a little after reflection, she just renders the form sufficiently doubtful, so as to avoid individual appli-

* Christian Life, Sermon 38.

† See Commination Service.

cation in a perfectly unwarrantable case. Johnson quotes the lines found in "Camden's Remains," upon a very wicked man, who was killed by a fall from his horse, in which he is supposed to say,

> "Between the stirrup and the ground,
> I mercy ask'd, I mercy found;"

but, alas! how many die in a senseless state of drunkenness; others too have no opportunity of seeking mercy, but die in the midst of a full career of sin.

Perhaps, after all, the most objectionable words are, "our dear brother." There is something not only insincere, but profane, in the use of these words on such an occasion. They are words we should not use to the gross sinner, or the malicious schismatic, in his lifetime. We bury many who are strangers, but who, if we had known them, we should have so addressed; and officially, as members of the household of faith, we can truly designate each as "dear brother." The simple term "brother," as used in the American Service, would be hardly objectionable, and, in a natural sense, quite proper. I remember once, a very conscientious clergyman saying that he did not think it right that the bodies of deceased dissenters (if utter separatists and railers) should be carried into the church, but that he should use the discretion given him by the rubric, and read the appointed service in the church-yard. But another clergyman observed, "Surely, if you are compelled to call the deceased 'our dear brother,' you need not strain at the gnat when swallowing the camel." Besides, such a course would be a useless indignity, supposed to be shown toward the deceased, and not taken as a caution or warning *to churchmen*, in which sense the above worthy clergyman intended it, and therefore it would be unwise and unchristian to offer such an offense, as it would be represented, to our differing brethren. Over many a dissenter heartily could the minister of the Church of England say, "our dear brother,"* but this is beside the

* At the same time, it must be said, that it would be well if dissenters, generally, would bury their own dead. If they will come to the church in death, after reviling her in life, they can hardly expect

question; it is in the cases of the grossly immoral, impenitent, almost wholly unbelieving, and of the bitter sectarian, that the conscience of the clergyman is wounded, and hence seeks relief.

The church may be said to pass no sentence respecting the state of the departed, and this is right (Rom. xiv. 4; Matt. vii. 1); she speaks and hopes the best, which is charitable (1 Cor. xiii. 5–7.). Still, in certain cases her words might be better if not of so strong a nature: though, if discipline were restored, they would be unexceptionable. It is a grand, and affecting, and most comforting service, when used as the church at first provided: and our "hearty thanks" may be truly offered up, though in heavy sorrow, over the corpse of a beloved friend, for, *to die is gain.*

"Oh what a difference," said Wesley, "is there between the English and Scotch mode of burial! The English does honor to human nature, and even to the poor remains that were once a temple of the Holy Ghost: but when I see in Scotland a coffin put into the earth, and covered up without a word spoken, it reminds me of what was spoken concerning Jehoiakim, *He shall be buried with the burial of an ass.*" Southey, in his kind and masterly way observes,* "It was indeed no proof of judgment, or of feeling, to reject the finest and most affecting ritual that ever was composed—a service *that finds its way to the heart, when the heart stands most in need of such consolation, and is open to receive it.*"

to be treated on equal terms with consistent churchmen. It is singular that dissenters, knowing the nature of the funeral service of the church, and that it is adapted (strictly speaking) to *her* beloved sons only, should endeavor to force the consciences of her ministers, themselves not despising the claims of conscience. Still, let nothing savoring of indignity be offered; and if they will persist in seeking burial at the hands of the church, let the church meet them in a forgetting and forgiving spirit. They are brethren.

* Life of Wesley, vol. ii. page 248.

## CHAPTER X.

### HIS CHURCHMANSHIP.

Dr. Johnson defended the practice of requiring subscription to the thirty-nine Articles in those admitted to the universities, thus: "As all who come into the country must obey the king, so all who come into an university must be of the church." May we not say, that much will depend upon the nature of the statutes of the university into which entrance is sought, together with the power of repealing or non-repealing such statutes? just as the law of the land is subject to revocation and addition: in other words, it may be necessary to obey the existing statutes, but are those liable to alteration? On another occasion he alluded to the alleged wrongness of making boys subscribe to articles they do not understand, and said, "The meaning of subscribing is, not that they fully understand all the articles, but that they will adhere to the Church of England." He had before asserted that the universities were founded to bring up members for the Church of England (*quære*, some Romish endowments?), and he went on to maintain, that if mere subscription of adherence to the Church of England were adopted, lads would still be puzzled to know what was meant by the term "Church of England," and wherein it differed from the Presbyterian, Romish, Greek, and Coptic churches. "But would it not be sufficient," asked Boswell, "to subscribe the Bible?" "Why, no, sir," returned Johnson, "for all sects will subscribe the Bible: nay, the Mohammedans will subscribe the Bible: for the Mohammedans acknowledge Jesus Christ, as well as Moses, but maintain, that God sent Mohammed as a still greater prophet than either."

It is at once seen, that if the universities are to educate for the Church of England only, subscription to the Bible merely would not be sufficient to keep them exclusive, for

Roman Catholics, Socinians, Quakers, and all sects (with little modern exception), would readily do so, and at once enter the universities: and thus we should, as Johnson expressed it, "supply our enemies with arms from our arsenal." The question is, whether it should continue to be "*our* arsenal" only, which forms a large subject, requiring for its solution much legal knowledge and decision. It was the debate on the petition of Archdeacon Blackburn, in favor of doing away with subscription, in the year 1792 (which was lost by a division of 217 to 71), which called forth Johnson's observations.

At another time, in connection with the subject of predestination, Boswell asked, "Is it necessary, sir, to believe all the thirty-nine Articles?" "Why, sir," replied Johnson, "that is a question that has been much agitated. Some have thought it necessary that they should all be believed: others have considered them to be only articles of peace, that is to say, you are not to preach against them."

The reasoning of Archdeacon Paley on subscription to articles of religion will occur to the reader's mind, and will serve to emancipate the over-scrupulous person. It is well that subscription should be required only to such articles as are of almost universal agreement.

Dr. Johnson approved of bishops having seats in the House of Lords; "Who is more proper," he asked, "for having the dignity of a peer, than a bishop, provided a bishop be what he ought to be?" But this is hardly the right way of putting a question which is one of the highest importance to the church. Doubtless, bishops make good peers, and so would clergymen, with Johnson's qualification, make good baronets. But does the peer improve the bishop, or do the duties of a peer in Parliament interfere with the diocesan labors of a bishop? It is said, that the church requires the advocacy of bishops in Parliament, and that no other persons can understand so well the wants of the church. But is this true? and will not support of the church come with better grace, and greater power, from the tongues of laymen, and can not lay churchmen be equally schooled in all the wishes of the church? Indeed, bishops differ so much, and vote so directly in opposition to one another on many matters which involve

the interests of the church, that the church herself is bewildered in attempting to distinguish between friends and foes on the episcopal bench: and after all, the main assistance to the church must be derived from the lay peers, who form the very great majority of the House. In the House of Commons, where she needs most help, the church is left in the hands of her lay friends, and we hear no complaints from the great body of the clergy of her interests being inadequately represented and pleaded in the face of many harsh opponents. The same arguments that serve to retain bishops in the House of Lords, ought to be urged for the election of members of the inferior clergy into the House of Commons.

Bishops also are expected to speak and vote on general questions of politics, and this tends to give the church a political complexion. Not only must much time be consumed by them (if they be conscientious men) in acquainting themselves with the great subjects debated, and in making themselves masters of Acts of Parliament, but also their speeches and votes are freely and unceremoniously canvassed in the lower as well as higher species of newspapers; and when we know the license given to political discussion and vituperation, it is not pleasing to see good and pious men, whom we ought always to behold with reverence, exposed to the mere wanton attacks of newspaper scribblers; neither, on the other hand, do we like to see vast praise lavished on a man for the display of abilities that would have been more appropriately exercised on his religious vocation. I remember once hearing some London lawyers of great eminence, who had been engaged in conducting a bill through the House of Lords, a bill which to a great extent served the cause of humanity, speak very highly of the arduous and availing labors of a certain excellent bishop, who was always at his post, and aided the cause greatly by his unwearied application and superior abilities; but, after all, the matter would have been better (not done better) in the hands of a lay peer, when we consider that the bishop was compelled to be absent from his diocese, and to attend for awhile to his spiritual functions with secondary zeal. It is quite true, that more bishops are needed in the church, proportionate to the

increase of population; for the number of bishops at present existent, bears no comparison with the numbers in primitive ages, and even immediately on the Reformation: but may it not be considered, that if bishops were removed from the House of Lords, each man might perform double or treble the supervision that he now is enabled to exercise; though dioceses, as at present constituted, are very far too extended and populous for the oversight of one man, even were his time entirely confined to that work. Numbers of the clergy actually only set eyes on their own bishop once in three years, and then only set eyes on him; while thousands upon thousands of Christian people live long lives, and, excepting, it may be, at the period of Confirmation, go down to the grave without once beholding the father of the diocese in which they reside. God forbid, that ever a popular revolution should hurl the bishops from the House of Lords, for with such an act the House of Lords itself would probably fall; but would that the bishops themselves would demand, in the beautiful and forcible words of the eloquent Bishop of Oxford, as applied to other secular matters, "entire exemption from the secular labors of a peer of Parliament, with all its usually accompanying secular life." The episcopal office is one, the possessor of which, from the nature of its responsibility and sanctity, must be either venerable or contemptible; and it is with this view strongly in his mind, that the present writer would desire to see the episcopal office rescued from every intense occupation of secular interest, and from every stain of wordliness, so that the former epithet might ever be fully merited, and lastingly maintained.

There is a long standing, constitutional question connected with this matter, which should be seriously weighed, and considered in all its bearings; but it may be very probable that the religious advantages would be discerned to be advanced by the separation of the political and spiritual privileges of the episcopate; and who then would rejoice more in being set free than the bishops themselves? How valuable would have been Dr. Johnson's deliberate sentiments, drawn out in full logical array, upon many of these important subjects! But, as Boswell remarks, "Though in his writings,

and upon all occasions, a great friend to the constitution, both in church and state, he has never written expressly in support of either."

The inequality of the livings of the English clergy, and the scanty payment of curates, was spoken of when Johnson observed, "Why, yes, sir; but it can not be helped. You must consider, that the revenues of the clergy are not at the disposal of the state, like the pay of an army. Different men have founded different churches: and some are better endowed, and some worse. The state can not interfere and make an equal division of what has been particularly appropriated. Now, when a clergyman has but a small living, or even two small livings, he can afford very little to the curate." At another time Boswell alluded to the very small salaries of some of the clergy, when Johnson remarked, "To be sure, sir, it is wrong that any clergyman should be without a reasonable income; but, as the church revenues were sadly diminished at the Reformation, the clergy who have livings can not afford, in many instances, to give good salaries to curates, without leaving themselves too little."

It is not curates only, it is the small incumbents of the Church of England who are her poorest ministers:* they have more difficulty in obtaining payment of their scanty incomes, and have to pay poor rates, road rates, taxes, and other

* The following is a portion of a petition drawn up by several of the clergy, at the close of the year 1848:

"Many of the most diligent and devoted ministers of the church, through anxiety for the support and comfort of their families, without any provision for themselves in old age or declining health, or any prospect of leaving to their families even a supply of the common necessaries and comforts of life, in case of their removal, have had their minds materially unfitted for the comfortable discharge of their duties, have been unable to meet the demands which the various societies, whether charitable or religious, of the present day have upon them, have been therefore discouraged in promoting such societies, and have found it difficult to maintain that influence, and authority, and independence of spirit, which is so necessary for a public and authorized teacher of our holy religion.

"We feel also that the inadequate support provided for so large a number of the ministers of Voluntary Churches has greatly tended to increase the evil."

charges, besides usually to keep a house and premises in sound repair. There can be little doubt that the spoliation of church property by Henry the Eighth was far too extended: and many lords and gentlemen are now in possession of incomes that ought to be expended in the service of religion, and are greatly needed for that purpose in many parts of the country. It has been quaintly remarked, that Henry the Eighth amended what was amiss even as the devil amended his dame's leg (as it is in the proverb), when he should have set it right, he brake it quite in pieces. And the poor as well as the clergy have been sufferers; for, notes the historian, where £20 was given to the poor yearly, in more than a hundred places in England, is not one meal's meat given. Reform or remodeling, according to the primitive institution, "would not have satisfied the ends of *himself* (Henry VIII.), and his *covetous and ambitious agents*. They all aimed at the *revenues* and *riches* of the religious houses. For which reason no arts and contrivances were to be passed by that might be of use in obtaining those ends. The most abominable crimes were to be charged on the religious, and the charge was to be managed with the utmost industry, boldness, and dexterity. This was a powerful argument to draw an odium upon them, and to make them disrespected and ridiculed by the generality of mankind. And yet, after all, the proofs were so insufficient, that from what I have been able to gather" (records the Protestant writer),* "I have not found any *direct* one against even any single monastery. When all accusations failed, ejection by force was resorted to, and thus by degrees the religious houses, and the estates belonging to them, having yielded to the king, he either sold or gave them to the lay nobility and gentry, *contrary to what he had at first pretended*."† Even Bishop Latimer petitioned that

* See preface to Dugdale's Monasticon.

† See Coke's Instit. part iv. p. 44. The project was, that "If the Parliament would give unto him (Henry the Eighth) all the abbeys, priories, friaries, nunneries, and other monasteries, that forever in time then to come he would take order, that the same should *not be converted to private use*, but set apart for public services, among others, the maintenance of 40,000 soldiers, the creation of a number of nobles, &c. The said monasteries were given to the king by authority of divers

some of these ancient houses might be preserved.* It is gratifying to observe the efforts which are being made in the present day to recover the alienated property of the church by the Tithe Redemption Association, at the head of which are those two excellent noblemen, of different political sentiments, Lord Robert Grosvenor and Lord John Manners.†

In regard to the abstract question of endowments for religious purposes, there seems to be no objection. All sects and classes of dissenters accept them, and some are in possession, of endowments of no mean value. Endowment, when adequate to the support of the minister, may be called freedom from all payment: and only an endowed church can say that she preaches the Gospel without money and without price to the people. Farmers that pay tithe or rent-charge, in so doing pay nothing of their own to the church. The matter may be familiarly explained in this way. Suppose a Christian, some fifty years ago, ordered in his will that a certain sum should be paid out of the rents of his landed estate to a county hospital; and suppose that the landlord of those estates desired the tenants (instead of bringing that bequeathed sum to him for his own use) to hand it over to the treasurer of the hospital, according to the wishes of the donor. Such tenants would be rogues if they did not faithfully pay the money: but still they could never say that they were paying it out of their own pockets. It

Acts of Parliament: but *no provision was therein made for the said project, or any part thereof:* the king took all to himself." See Calvin's Institutes, lib. iv. c. 13. Dugdale, vol. ii. p. 121.

* "After the visitation of the religious houses by commissioners from the king, divers of the visitors did petition the king that some of the houses, both for the virtue of the persons in them, and the benefit of the country (the poor receiving thence great relief, and the richer sort good education for their children), might be retained. Bishop Latimer also moved, that two or three might be left in every shire for pious uses; but Cromwell, by the king's permission, invaded all, while between threats, gifts, persuasions, promises, and whatsoever might make a man obnoxious, he obtained of the abbots, priors, abbesses, &c., that their houses might be given up."—*From Lord Herbert's History of King Henry the Eighth*, p. 442.

† Sir Henry Spelman's History, of Sacrilege &c., and the singular fatality attendant on the owners of Cowdray, and of other properties, will occur to the reader.

is true that their labor has earned the money from the land (as it has earned their rent, for all wealth is created by industry); it is true that it passes through their hands; but this is all; it never was, and never will be their own: therefore they can not be said to subscribe to the hospital out of their own pockets. Such is tithe or rent-charge. The tenant is only intrusted to pay a sum, that never was his own, to the account of the clergyman; and from him the clergyman receives no kind of gift or reward. If the tenth part of the land itself were set apart instead of the tenth of its produce, could the occupiers of the remainder complain they paid out of their own pockets? But the case is the same.

What an expense would be brought on the religious community, if the endowments of the church were done away: for the voluntary principle, of which we hear so much, is one of pure, unmitigated, personal charge. If an individual pays but one shilling per week, or per month, that shilling is his own payment, the produce of his own labor or estate. It is a principle to which the church is in some localities compelled to resort, but happier is the church that is free from such a chain. Paley* has well described the evils likely to accrue from an adoption of the voluntary principle. "Many," he says, in common with Dr. Chalmers, "would take advantage of the option which was thus imprudently left open to them, and this liberty might finally operate to the decay of virtue, and irrecoverable forgetfulness of all religion in the country." And even where payments might be willingly made, the evils of the system are apparent; and surely the dissenters have ample evidence of this. Why should they attempt to force a system upon the country which has ever been a failure with themselves? For, alas! while some few men of popular talent are successful, numbers are, notwithstanding their most urgent appeals to their flocks for pecuniary support, reduced to beggary; or, rather, since their begging fails, to poverty? Good men among them deeply feel their dependent condition. "Men of finer and more ethereal temperament," says a

* See his chapter on Religious Establishments, and Toleration.

modern writer,* "sink under the indignities and privations they endure in what they conceive to be the path of duty, and die broken-hearted. The real cause of their untimely departure is little understood by the people with whom they are associated. Sustained in their last hours by faith in their Redeemer, their lamented fate is ascribed to their anxious zeal too rapidly wearing out the springs of life: and their names are enrolled in the obituary of the sect, as *a testimony to the goodness of that system which destroyed them.*"

The question of endowments is quite a different one, yet often mixed up with that of the separation of church and state. Churches which have no connection with the state, such as the Episcopal Church in America, enjoy their own endowments. Endowments are not from the state, they very mainly proceed from voluntary benefactions. Nothing but a system of might before right could rob the church of her revenues, derived, not from the people's pockets, but from the gifts of people many centuries deceased. The dissenters think (if we may judge by the opinions of some) that the church is to run away, in a destitute condition, from the embrace of the too enamored state; she is not, as of old, to "spoil the Egyptians," but is to walk out of the grand state hotel, leaving all her bag and baggage behind her, and start upon a new railway pilgrimage, with nothing to pay her fare! But no; this robbery can never be countenanced in moral and honest England: if the church is to be divorced from the state, let her, at least, take her own revenues, with her, giving unto Cæsar that which is Cæsar's, but retaining for God that which is clearly and indisputably God's. And what of her property is not her own?† In point of fact, the state has no ecclesiastical patronage, for all rights of presentation are private property, of which the state or legislature merely guarantees the quiet possession and

* Hull's Ecclesiastical Establishments not inconsistent with Christianity. Hatchard. Page 74.

† On this matter, see *The State in its Relations with the Church*, by W. E. Gladstone, Esq. M. P., especially Chapter iii. p. 103, &c. The property of the church, he maintains was not so much from tithes as from "gifts of lands which were notoriously and indisputably voluntary."

free exercise. The crown possesses patronage; so do corporations; but neither of these are the state. If a church, built and endowed by an individual now, be deserving of legal protection, why should not a church built and endowed by the same voluntary means four hundred years ago, be treated with the same consideration? Length of usage surely improves and strengthens a title. If the church goes forth from the state, she must, on all the grounds of law, of justice, of equity, of common right, and common sense, go forth with what is her own in her hand, and on her back: at her peril, she must not resign those sacred treasures which have been solemnly delivered over to her care, her guardianship, and her direction. For we must bear in mind, that no antagonistic society of Christians, excepting the Church of Rome, is laying claim to her revenues; so that endowments granted solely for spiritual purposes, for the health of the souls of the people, would be utterly taken away from religion, and expended on things purely secular. There would be no changing of owners, such as took place at the Reformation: although, since dissenters refuse not endowments for themselves, it is difficult to see how they could consistently refuse the endowments of the Church of England, if they could get them.

The union of church and state is another question, and yet it is thought to be bound up, some way or other, with the property of the church. Strange that a separation should be sought, because it is surely a sound principle that governments are bound to provide for the best welfare of their people; and indeed this is a truth never questioned by statesmen or philosophers down to the period of the nineteenth century. If the state has not power given her to promote religion, how can she claim power for repressing vice and encouraging morality? "We need be little moved," says Gladstone, "by the taunts of those who reproach us with a 'law church.' It is a law church; we rejoice in the fact: but how? just as, by the sovereign's proclamation against vice, *the morals of the nation are crown morals.*" And, recollect, the law is Christian law; and law administered, too, by Christian men. Hence Dr. Arnold glories in the union of church and

state. They are one and the same thing in his idea. He says,* "The perfect state and the perfect church are identical;" and again, "The state can not be perfect till it possess the wisdom of the church, nor the church be perfect till it possess the power of the state; the one has, as it were, the soul, and the other the organized body, each of which requires to be united with the other;" and he appears to applaud "the original idea of the Church of England, as only another name for the state and nation of England."† Burke was of the same opinion, for he says, "In a Christian commonwealth, the church and the state are one and the same thing, being different integral parts of the same whole." And this great man, whom Dr. Johnson thought a great man, further said, "Religion is so far, in my opinion, from being out of the province or duty of a Christian magistrate, that it is, and it ought to be, not only his care, *but the principal thing in his care;* because it is one of the great bonds of human society, and its object the supreme good, the ultimate end and object of man himself." Quotations from wise men might be multiplied, but this one is sufficient.

It must be minded that separation of church and state does not mean the swamping of lay power, and the placing the government of the church in clerical hands only. At present the church acknowledges herself, even in her governing powers, to be composed of laity and clergy; and though not created by Act of Parliament, neither to be annihilated by Act of Parliament, and hence, not liable to the ignorant sarcasm of being a Parliamentary church; yet she is, for some purposes (not as a church, but as an establishment), in the hands of Parliament; and since Parliament is elected by

* Arnold's Lectures on Modern History, p. 51–59; and 246.

† I know that many are inclined to say, that Parliament is becoming infidel, and the state is separating from the church, not the church from the state—which of course would affect the validity of the above argument. "You are treating Parliament all through," such will exclaim, "as if composed of Christians, instead of persons, a great proportion of whom are *de jure* excommunicate, either for immorality or schism." Why does not the church excommunicate them *de facto?* Why does she not extricate herself from their clutches? may be questions that naturally occur.

the people, she is in the hands of the electoral bodies of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland. She is under the control and influence of laymen far more than any sect; especially, for instance, such a sect as the Wesleyans, whose government in America is wholly ecclesiastical, and in England nearly so; and governed, too, by a self-elected body, who eschew the representative principle as practiced by those vast bodies of men who control the Church of England. Doubtless, the church would be more independent if freed from the state; for then, like other sects, she could make her own laws, appoint her own officers, and, in all things, do as she liked: but might we not justly fear that her power, considering her wealth, talent, and numbers, would become too great? Should not the nation at large be rightly jealous of the authority of the church to meet in convocation, to refuse the crown the appointment to bishoprics, and to make canons at her discretion? Parliament has always broken through the absoluteness of church government of modern times. The canons of 1640, passed by Laud in the fullness of his power, were done away by the Parliament, and the writ "De hæretico comburendo" abolished by parliamentary law. And we know how it has abolished, of very late time, tests and oaths, which were an impediment to the free exercise of conscience: so that the very men who would first and most feel the absence of parliamentary restraint on the church, are those who are, unreasonably enough, crying out for the separation of church and state. Let such men listen to the salutary warning of the late Dr. Arnold: "If men run away," he says,* "with the mistaken notion that liberty of conscience is threatened only by a state religion, and not at all by a church religion, the danger is, that they will abandon religion altogether to what they call the church; that is, to the power of a society far worse governed than most states, and likely to lay far heavier burdens on individual conscience, because the spirit dominant in it is narrower and more intolerant." We have perfect religious liberty now; such religious liberty as Paley speaks of, when he says, "Religious liberty is, like civil liberty, not an immunity from restraint

* Lectures on Modern History, p. 46.

but the being restrained by no law but what *in a greater degree conduces to the public welfare.*"

By such laws the church is now controlled. Men should consider, that, if deprived of her endowments, she would still be the wealthiest and most authoritative religious body in the state: and since we may well suppose that her numbers (as regarded veritable and devoted members) would increase rather than decrease—for dissenters, if they speak honestly now, would themselves then rush into the church—might it not be a just fear lest in time she would overpower the state, rather than the state trample upon her? If church and state are to be separated (and who are to separate them? for the state, we may imagine, would rather continue the alliance), men ought to insist that the government of the church be in the hands of the laity and clergy alike, and not intrusted to ecclesiastical and spiritual persons only. The arrangements of the Episcopal Church in America, one of the foremost churches in Christendom, may be held up as a pattern —a church that never hears or raises the cry of "church in danger," because she is governed only by churchmen, while the Church of England is compelled to submit (and hence the high church party encourage the idea of separation), to the legislative enactments of enemies mingled with friends—a church that is reared on a noble and wide platform of laical voting, and laical help, direction, and correction. It is for the people of England calmly to consider, whether they will best enjoy their rights and liberties under a system of church and state, or with a church free and unshackled from union with the state, to do as she pleases: and it is for the clergy and superior laity to consider also, whether they are prepared, if need be, to go into the wilderness and erect a palatial greatness of their own: promulgate their laws: lord it over their followers: and in all their desires advance right ahead, as though there were no such things as a House of Commons and electoral bodies of the people existent in the nation.

This is a question of vast moment to millions, and must be wisely adjudicated, with avoidance of all extreme notions which are apt to be indulged in by heated factions. The subversion of the church would rob an immense mass of

the people of their accustomed and loved means of religious instruction, free of expense comparatively; while such an act would unsettle their minds, demoralize the country, and "substitute disorder and infidelity for the benign influences of the most graceful institution that adorns and blesses the land." It is very probable, that the very great majority of dissenters are, as we know the Wesleyans earnestly to be, in favor of an establishment of religion; and certainly dissenters have no more reason to seek the subversion of the Established Church, as a matter of conscience, than any one sect of them should feel it incumbent on them to desire the overthrow of every other sect.* Difference of opinion there will always be, and we are not to seek the fitness of all men to a Procrustean bed, but to learn to bear with diversities of sentiment, and while we rejoice in our own settledness, seek to promote the peace and welfare of others; for, says St. Paul, *if I had all faith and had not charity, I am nothing* "He," observes Jeremy Taylor on this text, "who, upon confidence of his true belief, denies a charitable communion to his brother, *loses the reward of both.*"

The question of private patronage is a far more important one to the church at large, clergy and laity, than that of connection of the church with the state. Perhaps this is often confounded in people's minds with the other: and ignorant persons, who are led to believe that their pastor is a "state parson," may be apt to think that with the disruption of church and state, the state parson must succumb;

* In Cromwell's time, under different circumstances, such an attempt was made. In all ages, in lesser or greater extent, such a spirit may be exhibited. It is harder in matters of religion, than in political affairs, to induce persons to be tolerant, to grant liberty of thought to others. It was well said, in regard to *political*, and equally applicable to religious toleration, "I think it unreasonable that gentlemen, who are always so merry *upon every man who differs from them*, should be so much irritated when any one *presumes to use the same liberty with them. To roast a minister, or a placeman*, is their common diversion; but *once smile at a patriot, they are instantly in arms.* Such a breach of decency and good breeding calls for the loudest outcries, and severest resentment." Portion of a speech luckily preserved in the scanty Reports of Debates in the House of Commons, 1740.—See *Gentleman's Magazine*, vol. x. p. 499.

often too, perhaps the word "state" is confounded with that of "law," for, after all, in the case of both churchmen and dissenters, it is the law of the land, more than the state, that is their principal protection.

It is a fact, that the great mass of church patronage, or presentation to livings, is in the gift of the laity: that is, lords, and squires, and other possessors of landed and household property, appoint the clergyman to the care of a parish. It is true, that this right is limited, owing to the tests required by the church; and herein consists a main use of such tests. But for these, as Paley observes,* "a Popish patron might appoint a priest to say mass to a congregation of Protestants: an Episcopal clergyman be sent to officiate in a parish of Presbyterians: or a Presbyterian divine to inveigh against the errors of Popery before an audience of Papists." He also notes the disturbance, the bitter animosities, the unconquerable aversions. that would be engendered by popular election of a minister, according as, on each vacancy, one sectarian party or other prevailed in the parish or district; all which is to show us, that with a legal and established payment there must, for peace sake, be legal preference of one particular religion to all others. But with patronage, as it at present holds, we have only now to do; and therefore it is well to state, in the outset, that the exercise of private patronage is much restricted by the tests proposed by the church.

Dr. Johnson has, in a great degree, treated this subject elaborately and admirably. He argues on the case of patronage in Scotland, which is much the same with that exercised in England. As regards the positive right of patronage, since it is a matter of law and not conscience, he says well, "No man's conscience can tell him the rights of another man; they must be known by rational investigation or historical inquiry." Again, he observes, "It is a conscience very ill informed, that violates the rights of one man for the convenience of another."

He tells us whence the right of patronage was derived. On Christianity being established, and a public mode of

* Moral Philosophy. On Toleration, vol. ii. p. 315.

worship prescribed, public places of worship were required, and ministers to officiate in them: hence the landed proprietors, on becoming converts to the faith, built such places, and set apart lands for the maintenance of pastors to administer to the religious wants and welfare of their families and vassals; the extent of a manor and a parish being usually the same. The endowment of the church being the gift of the landlord, he thought himself at liberty to give the possession of it to whatever minister he pleased; "the people did not choose him, because the people did not pay him." This right has ever followed the lands; it is possessed by the same registry by which the lands are possessed.

The right being certain, next comes the convenience of it. Dr. Johnson is an advocate for its continuance, in its present integrity. Abuses, he seems to think, can not be avoided. "It were to be desired," he says, speaking of property in general, with his usual sense of humanity, "that power should be only in the hands of the merciful, and riches in the possession of the generous: but the law must leave both power and riches where it finds them; and must often leave riches with the covetous, and power with the cruel." He does not think the people would gain by a change in the right of patronage. "Why," he asks, "should we suppose that the parish will make a wiser choice than the patron?" The patron, he thinks, may be the only judge in a parish of a minister's learning, and of his piety not less a judge than others. Also that the patron would be most offended by deficiencies in the pastor, because it would be imputed to his own absurdity or corruption. He is more likely, too, to inquire beforehand into a minister's qualifications and character, than "one of the parochial rabble, who can give nothing but a vote." Dr. Johnson, on this subject, argues like a counselor who is retained to make the best of his case *per fas et nefas*. It must be seen by an impartial looker-on, that he avoids all middle courses, and ranges before his mental vision nothing save the patron on one hand, and the whole people of a parish on the other. And thus he goes on to descant, and, it may be, without exaggeration, on the evils of the popular election of a minister. These evils are very great. A min-

ister must ply all the arts, perhaps bribery and flattery, of a candidate: and when he has won the day, "on what terms," asks Dr. Johnson, "does he enter upon his ministry *but those of enmity with half his parish?*" And how shrewd are the following remarks, made with a keen knowledge of human nature in its common practice! "Of a minister presented by the patron, the parish has seldom any thing worse to say than that they do not know him. Of a minister chosen by a popular contest, all those who do not favor him have nursed up in their bosoms principles of hatred and *reasons of rejection.* Anger is excited principally by pride. The pride of a common man is very little exasperated by the supposed usurpation of an acknowledged superior. He bears only his little share of a general evil, and suffers in common with the whole parish: but when the contest is between equals, *the defeat has many aggravations;* and he that is defeated by his next neighbor is seldom satisfied without some revenge; and it is hard to say what bitterness of malignity would prevail in a parish where these elections should happen to be frequent, and the enmity of opposition should be rekindled before it cooled."

Unfortunately, there are parishes in connection with the Church of England, where popular election prevails. These times usually present a scene of intemperance, confusion, and the display of wrathful temper. "Williams and the Gospel forever!" "No Jones and Church!" "Down with Smith and Sacraments!" are loudly shouted by drunken men at their wits' end. And when even the popular man has been elected, he has been subjected to acts of insolence and spoliation (his windows broken—his harness cut to pieces—garden ravaged), by miscreants of the opposite party: and often he himself, innocently and unsuspectingly, is the cause of enmity between more respectable persons, before whom he can not exhibit the symbols of the body and blood of the Lord of peace, until they be "in love and charity with their neighbors!" How often does the popular abuse of a privilege prevent men from countenancing an advance toward its moderate use: how often do men hug the military despot, from their horror of popular tyranny and anarchy! Yet, because popular election of ministers, in its full extent, is to be avoided—and

certainly we have no instance of such popular election recorded in the New Testament—still we may not be debarred from considering whether a modified system of parochial election may not be resorted to with great advantage. For see how dire the case is with a Unitarian Lord-Chancellor on the woolsack, and with lords, and country gentlemen, of infidel or profligate principles: and hence, by what an almost heretic, or by what a reprobate, unknown to the bishop of the diocese, may church livings be possessed! How painful, even to a dying evangelical pastor, to know that a son or nephew of the patron will succeed him, and such person famed mainly for sporting habits, or carelessness; thus leaving the best of the flock to wander from their lawful shepherd to seek the greenness of other pastures! In many cases, too, a minister may not be a bad man; he may not be a sportsman, he may not be careless, but he may not be such a man as the parishioners have been accustomed to hear, accustomed to welcome into their houses, accustomed to regard as an affectionate counselor and comforter in sickness and in health—he may not be a Vich-Ian Vohr* to the devoted clan. Ay, he may be a good man, a kind man, a sensible man, but not the man to minister to their spiritual necessities and edification.

And how is this to be remedied? It may be answered, by a modification of the system. Let not the patron be absolute, neither let the "parochial rabble," as Johnson terms them, have a vote: but let the matter be decided by the best, the most exemplary residents in the parish, acting in conjunction with the patron. And those should be judged to be most exemplary, who are the most regular attendants on the ordinances of the church, and most endued with her spirit of unfeigned faith and piety. There ought to be some plan of this kind adopted, now that the church claims to be accounted a national church, and a clergyman regards himself, by this episcopal license, as the minister of the whole of the people resident in the parish to which he is appointed, and not only, as in olden time, for the benefit of the patron's family and dependents: and it will happen, that the people will desire and demand this voice at a time when it may be perilous to

* In allusion to the pathetic farewell words of Fergus McIvor, in *Waverley*.

the existence of the church to offer it with our proposed limits: perilous, because what a patron is asked willingly to concede now, may be exacted by a power of might before right, which respects no individual will, and no national law.

And, after all, a sensible patron would wish to act in conformity with the views of the respectable and religious inhabitants of a parish. It is very pleasing to find Dr. Johnson counseling such a fulfillment of an important and sacred duty. He thought "that a patron should exercise his right with tenderness to the inclinations of the people of a parish:" and in his famous argument in defence of lay patronage,* from which we have quoted above, he observes, "If, by some strange concurrence, all the voices of a parish should unite in the choice of any single man, though I could not charge the patron with injustice for presenting a minister, I should censure him as unkind and injudicious." We find from his beautiful allegory of PATRONAGE in the "Rambler," that although she set out with that "dignity of aspect which struck terror into false merit," yet that ere long she was found to be "but half a goddess," and her decisions had been sometimes erroneous: at last she began to "degenerate toward terrestrial nature, and forgot the precepts of Justice and Truth." Bishop Burnet speaks strongly:† "Perpetual advowsons, which are kept in families as a provision for a child, who must be put in orders, *whatever his aversion to it or unfitness for it may be, bring a prostitution on holy things.* And parents, who present their undeserving children, have this aggravation of their guilt, that they are not so apt to be deceived in this case as they may be when they present a stranger. Concerning these they may be imposed on by the testimony of those whom they do not suspect: but they must be supposed to be better informed as to their own children."

Johnson might write with all the greater authority on this delicate and difficult matter, since he so nobly refused a presentation to an incumbency. This is a matter deserving both these epithets: delicate, because we seem to impugn the judgment or conscience of patrons to a greater degree than there may be actual warrant for: difficult, because we are

* In the Appendix to Croker's Edition of Boswell.

† The Pastoral Care, in the Clergyman's Instructor, 4th edit. p. 230.

interfering with the best established rights of private property; and it may be argued, that if one portion of our property is not secure against the law of innovation and change, neither can we trust that the other will always be. On the whole, the present system is far better in its practice than the theory of it would lead us to expect; for in theory it appears unsound and anomalous: but still it would be well, we would venture to think, if some plan of the kind above suggested could be assented to by the patrons; for we hold that it would reconcile people, very extensively, to the church, both in her temporal and spiritual capacities, and very probably there would, in due time, arise a strong desire to restore the ancient discipline of the Christian church. It must be some moderated scheme as the above suggested one, or the main grievance would still remain, that of placing the patronage in the hands of ungodly persons, by adopting universal suffrage in regard to the inhabitants of a parish: and besides, the clergy themselves, in some instances, in populous places, might be led, instead of flattering one person, to flatter the age, which, of the two kinds of hateful pandering, is the most mischievous, and fully as degrading. The poet Wordsworth* describes such a one who, excited by the breaking out of the French Revolution, and hastening from his rural and retired home into the metropolis:

> "Thither his popular talents he transferr'd;
> And from the pulpit zealously maintain'd
> The cause of Christ and civil liberty,
> As one, and moving to one glorious end.
> Intoxicating service!"

But how does the poet picture his sad and miserable end, when,

> "In despite
> Of all this outside bravery, within,
> He neither felt encouragement nor hope:
> For moral dignity, and strength of mind,
> Were wanting, and simplicity of life;
> And reverence for himself; and, last and best,
> Confiding thoughts through love and fear of Him
> Before whose sight the troubles of this world
> Are vain as billows in a tossing sea."

* The Excursion, book ii. p. 49–51.

## CHAPTER XI.

### HIS CHURCHMANSHIP

Dr. Johnson read many works in divinity, and was well acquainted with the writings of some of the most celebrated divines of the Church of England, as well as with a few of those of dissenting denominations. Sir John Pringle once expressed a wish that Boswell would ask him, What were the best English sermons for style? Accordingly, Boswell took a fitting opportunity, and began with a name which probably he thought would best secure Johnson's favorable judgment and sympathy.

Boswell.—"Atterbury?"

Johnson.—"Yes, sir, one of the best."

Boswell.—"Tillotson?"

Johnson.—"Why, not now. I should not advise a preacher at this day to imitate Tillotson's style: though I don't know; *I should be cautious of objecting to what has been applauded by so many suffrages.* South is one of the best, if you except his peculiarities, and his violence, and sometimes coarseness of language. Seed has a very fine style: but he is not very theological. Jortin's sermons are very elegant. Sherlock's style, too, is very elegant, though he has not made it his principal study. And you may add Smalridge. All the latter preachers have a good style. Indeed, nobody now talks much of style: every body composes pretty well. I should recommend Dr. Clarke's sermons, were he orthodox. However, it is very well known *where* he is not orthodox, which was upon the doctrine of the Trinity, as to which he is considered a heretic: so one is aware of it."

Boswell.—"I like Ogden's sermons on Prayer very much, both for neatness of style, and subtilty of reasoning."

Johnson.—"I should like to read all that Ogden has written."

Boswell.—"What I wish to know is, what sermons afford the best specimen of English pulpit eloquence."

Johnson.—"We have no sermons addressed to the passions that are good for any thing: if you mean that kind of eloquence."

A Clergyman (whose name I do not recollect).—"Were not Dodd's sermons addressed to the passions?"

Johnson.—"They were nothing, sir, be they addressed to what they may."

Bishop Atterbury, as an adherent, in his heart, of the Pretender, a maintainer of the use and rights of Convocation, and as a supporter of Sacheverel, and drawing on himself the opposition of Hoadley, would certainly find favor in Johnson's eyes; but still, though a man of too ardent and haughty a disposition, he was accounted an eloquent preacher, and, next to Smalridge, one of the finest Latin writers of his time. He was both a learned and a brilliant man. The severity with which he was treated when the charge of high treason (too justly) was brought against him, and the rigorous treatment which was continued toward him in his banishment, though Pope hoped that Providence had appointed him to some great and useful work (of genius rather than politics), and called him to it in this severe way, could not but call forth the commiseration of the multitude with whom he was popular, as well as the cordial sympathy of the learned and more accomplished of mankind. The spirit of Atterbury is still, in some degree, in the Church of England, and best represented, perhaps, by the able and undaunted Bishop of Exeter (Dr. Philpotts), a man supposed by the thoughtless to lean toward the Church of Rome, but, like Atterbury, when tempted by the doctors of the Sorbonne, ready to take up the gauntlet on the condition that the Bible should be taken for the sole and ultimate rule of decision. It was a brother of the bishop (Lewis Atterbury) who answered the attack of Colson (a Roman Catholic) on the *Discourses against Popery* by Archbishop Tillotson, so that both the brothers, as high churchmen, were learned and stanch Protestants.

Johnson qualifies his observations on Archbishop Tillotson, though elsewhere he complains of his "verbosity." Correct

writers would not be pleased with the style of Tillotson, though his argument and matter are so valuable. In Sir Thomas Fitzosborne's Letters* (the real author of which was William Melmoth, famed for elegant diction), exception is taken to the archbishop's ill-chosen words, inharmonious periods, and mean metaphors; this author regretting that "he who abounds with such generous and noble sentiments, should want the art of setting them off with all the advantage they deserve." Still his sermons are a great storehouse of divinity, calculated to convince the skeptic, arm the Protestant, and confirm the Christian.

Tillotson, politically and theologically speaking, may be accounted the very opposite of Atterbury. He, the early nonconformist (and friend of Bishop Wilkins, brother-in-law of Cromwell, so anxious to comprehend dissenters within the pale of the church), who was promoted by King William; who wrote, "I thank God I have lived to have my last desire in this world, which was *this happy Revolution;* who succeeded a retiring non-juror on the throne of Lambeth; who wished the church were well rid of the Athanasian Creed: between such a one and the Bishop of Rochester there could be little agreement; and hence we find the whole of that party who would, in later times, have followed Atterbury, pronouncing Tillotson to be a schismatic, and pursuing him with hatred and scurrilous language, even to his death. All this he bore with remarkable mildness and there seems to have been in him a notable union of intellectual power with natural sweetness of disposition. His moderation and sober arguments converted the Earl of Shrewsbury to Protestantism. "I am, and always was, more concerned," he says, "that your lordship should continue a virtuous and good man, than become a Protestant; being assured that the ignorance and errors of men's understanding will find a much easier forgiveness with God, than the faults of their will." Now that all party prejudices of that time have passed away, as regards their personal application, Tillotson's works are reaping their due and just reward; and

* Letters on Several Subjects, by Sir Thomas Fitzosborne, Bart. Letter 24.

though it may not be desirous always to imitate his style, yet who would not wish to possess one tithe of his vast powers of reasoning and sublimity in morals, as well as sound Christian teaching displayed in his discourses? He shone as a preacher, and is said, more than any other preacher of reputation, to have been the means of establishing in the Church of England the habit of delivering written sermons. Atterbury was born about seven years after the decease of this archbishop.

Dr. South, in part a contemporary of Atterbury, was born thirty-four years previous to the death of Tillotson. These divines are taken, not in chronological, but in order as spoken of by Dr. Johnson. Dr. Johnson especially recommended his sermons on Prayer. Some sentences in these resemble Johnson's style; for instance, where he is speaking on brevity of expression in prayer, especially since the Almighty can anticipate our wants: "For," he says, "according to the most natural interpretation of things, this is to ascribe to him a sagacity so quick and piercing, that it were presumption to inform, and a benignity so great, that it were needless to importune him." In this discourse he uses his more homely way, and says: "It is a common saying, If a man does not know how to pray, let him go to sea, and that will teach him:" and again, he speaks of a man talking of storms, shipwrecks, &c., when "safe and warm in his parlor;" though he finishes this discourse with elegant conciseness: "And I know no prayer necessary," he says, "that is not in the Liturgy, but one; which is this, That God would vouchsafe to continue the Liturgy itself in use, honor, and veneration, in this church forever."

Never was there such a slashing preacher as South; he was as the Picton or the Murat of the ecclesiastical army. Determined to read the proscribed Prayer Book when he was at Oxford, in vain was Cromwellian discipline brought against him, in vain did the Independent dean of his college attempt to withstand his fearless and sarcastic answers. No man was more rude and violent in controversy, whether in opposition to Sherlock, or to the disputing fanatics, whom he ridiculed and detested, always accounting them to be wolves

in sheep's clothing; and yet we are told, that he was sincerely and humbly pious, and passed much time in private devotion, ever fearing a return to popery and arbitrary government. How possible is it for men themselves to be most arbitrary in their opposition to arbitrary measures! His unrivaled abilities made his preaching popular, and never in any man's life could more exuberant zeal have been displayed. He was another Atterbury in politics and theology, with still greater power, still more aggressive spirit. He minced not matters, and with the puritanical religionists of the age he waged undying war. Much to his honor, he refused preferment over and over again. He was offered an archbishopric in Ireland, and declined; he would not succeed one of the deprived bishops in England; he refused the bishopric of Rochester (which Atterbury accepted), with the deanery of Westminster. Johnson has well described South's style, but, perhaps, the very defects alluded to won him an immense popularity; and very many would think that we need his bold and unsparing manner in this our smoother day. Altogether, notwithstanding his brilliant powers, his was not the mind and heart that the Liturgy of the Church of England is calculated to form and cherish, for he lacked the calmness, and sweetness, and largeness which are its characteristics: like the mild Melancthon, *it is words and matter.** It must be recollected that South lived in a day when men most arrogantly laid claim to the teaching of the Spirit—when "to be book-learned and to be irreligious, were almost terms convertible;" and when a vulgar fanaticism led the multitude to prefer the discoursing of ignorant men, who were "able to make a pulpit before they preached in it."†

* "It is reported, that in the house of worthy Mr. Luther," says Bishop Hall, "was found written, 'Melancthon was words and matter; Luther matter without words; Erasmus words without matter.'"

† Dr. South, although not greatly liking the constitution of the state as prevailing in his time—for he acknowledged the legality of the succession only as determined by necessity, when James had withdrawn—yet was a strenuous supporter of the union of church and state, preaching from the significant text of 1 Kings xiii. 33, 34, and largely quoting Scripture in favor of his views. In this discourse, he characteristically says, for it comes well from one who refused so much

In these days of education and general enlightenment we are escaping from such absurdities, and for the article of religion we go rather to the studies of the most learned and discreet. At the same time, there must be no display of learned subtlety and curious interpretation, for those who are hungering for the plain and common bread of life, or the complaints of M. de Sorbierre against Clement the Ninth, for sending him compliments rather than substantial aid in his necessities, may be realized. "He sends," he says, "sweetmeats to one who wants solid food! ruffles to a man that has never a shirt! I wish to Heaven that he would but allow me bread, to eat with the butter which he presents me with." Jortin and Sherlock are still much read by common readers of divinity. Of the former we are told,* that though there may be many writers "whose reputation is more diffused among the vulgar and illiterate, but few will be found whose names stand higher than Dr. Jortin's in the esteem of the judicious. His Latin poetry is classically elegant; his discourses and dissertations, sensible, ingenious, and argumentative; his sermons replete with sound sense and rational morality, expressed in a style simple, pure, and Attic." He was remarkable for "a simplicity of manners, an inoffensive behavior, and universal benevolence, candor, modesty, and good sense." He was fond of a laconic mode of speech, and

great preferment, "It is a sad thing when all other employments shall empty themselves into the ministry, when men shall repair to it for refuge." And he again speaks: "Religion in a great measure stands or falls according to the abilities of those who assert it." And just before, in his accustomed manner, he had thus jocosely treated his dissenting brethren: "The ignorant have took heart to venture upon this great calling; and instead of cutting their way to it, according to the usual course, through the knowledge of the tongues, the study of philosophy, school divinity, the fathers and councils, they have taken another and a shorter cut; and having read, perhaps, a treatise or two upon 'The Heart,' 'The Bruised Reed,' 'The Crumbs of Comfort,' 'Wollebius in English,' and some other little authors—the usual furniture of old women's closets—they have set forth as accomplished divines, and forthwith they present themselves to the service; and there have not been wanting Jeroboams as willing to consecrate and receive them, as they to offer themselves."

* Essays, Moral and Literary, by Vicesimus Knox, vol. ii. p. 115, 2d edition.

being once asked by a clergyman why he did not publish his sermons, "They shall sleep," he replied, "till I sleep." His last words in the hour of death were significant, when, in answer to a female attendant who offered him some nourishment, he said, with great composure, "No; I have had enough of every thing." Sherlock we may call more than elegant; he is argumentative in his occasional discourses, as well as in those on Prophecy, and awful in his book on Death. Yet we know not which of the Sherlocks' writings Dr. Johnson here alludes to, the father or son, though the latter was his contemporary, and probably the one meant; but both were controversial: the former carried on a controversy with South respecting the doctrine of the Trinity, and also successfully exposed the Puritans; and the son with Bishop Hoadley in defense of the Corporation and Test Acts; and the practical compositions of both are much admired: the latter especially is considered as affording one of the best patterns of English pulpit eloquence. "You may add Smalridge," remarks Johnson; and a worthy addition too. A more exact scholar than Atterbury, and taking the same line of politics, he lacked his bold and furious energy. No man could be more careful than he was to preserve the golden mean between Romanism and Dissent, and this is amply proved if we only refer to his very discreet and considerate discourse on Religious Ceremonies, in which, while he greatly lauds the Reformation because it restored such matters to their primitive simplicity and pure intention, he yet candidly says: "In the Romish religion there are some things evil, some things good, some things wholly indifferent." And truly does he aver, that if it be laid down as a good rule of reformation, that we must depart as far as possible from Rome, *we must renounce the articles of our Creed*, because they of that church profess to believe them; we must declare ourselves Socinians that we may be thought stanch Protestants; and we must renounce the doctrine of the Trinity, because it is held by those who do also hold that of Transubstantiation. This agrees well with the matchless Hooker, who says, "They which measure religion by dislike of the Church of Rome, think every man so much the more sound,

by how much he can make the corruptions thereof to seem more large."* In the present day there is much vituperation of the Roman Catholic belief, indeed it stands forth too prominently in lieu of those sound arguments against the Church of Rome which every Protestant should as mildly and firmly, as he may legitimately, use. What good purpose have fierce denunciations ever subserved? and what evil purposes have they not subserved? Will Roman Catholics be converted by wholesale anathemas directed against their faith? or will Church of England Protestantism gain by such virulence and such rhetoric? No, he who should admire the scolding would be as unworthy as the scolder, and his conversion, further than mere change of opinion, would not be worth recording in the Reformed Church. No persons miss their aim so thoroughly and so frequently as those who deal in abuse rather than in reasoning, who exhibit a knowledge of religion in the head, but no practical holding of it in the heart. "The Scripture philosophy is, says Alexander Knox, "that there are no right actions where there are no right tempers:" and he describes a Roman Catholic, of whom he says, "I never heard, nor could expect to hear, any Roman Catholic speak more the language, and breathe more the spirit, of unfeigned Christian charity." † In short, he desired to do all he could to promote and cherish Christian sympathy. This conduct, of course, had a pleasing effect on Knox; and such a temper on the part of Protestants would, in a similar manner, affect the hearts of Roman Catholics. Ogden he praised more than once, but somehow or other, he often took up his sermons, and as quickly laid them down, although he expressed a desire to become acquainted with all his works. He was a Church of England divine, and an elegant writer, and acute reasoner.

"I prevailed on Dr. Johnson," says Boswell, "to read aloud Ogden's sixth Sermon on Prayer, which he did with a distinct expression, and pleasing solemnity. He praised my favorite preacher, his elegant language, and remarkable acuteness; and said, he fought infidels with their own weap-

* Ecclesiastical Polity, vol. ii. p. 460.
† Knox's Correspondence, vol. ii. p. 33.

ons." In this sermon, which is a very short one, he advocates the doctrine of Free-will, saying: "Can we suppose the Supreme Being thus violently to invade His own works, and overrule the minds of His creatures, whom He hath made *free?* where, henceforth, is their blame or merit? and where His justice?"* Johnson afterward said, "I should like to read all that Ogden has written." In Sermon II. on the Articles of Faith, he has this admirable sentence: "We stand disputing and quarreling about the religion of Nature and Revelation, but regard neither much further than the mere profession: zealots for a system which has no effect on our heart or life: *contending each with eagerness for the articles of his faith;* agreeing, on *both sides, to forget the duty of it.*" Bishop Halifax, who edits the Sermons of Ogden, speaks of the fifth discourse on the Articles of Faith, which was preached before a learned auditory at Cambridge, as an "elegant representation of the dialectic genius of the Platonic school." Dr. Ogden, according to the account given of him by Bishop Halifax, was a most humane and tender-hearted man, though of rustic address and stern aspect. During the latter part of his life he labored under much ill-health, but endured all his illness with cheerfulness, for "he was fully resigned to the disposals of Providence, and full of the hopes of happiness in a better state."

The interest that Dr. Johnson took in the melancholy affairs of Dr. Dodd is well known to every reader of Boswell's Life; and probably that excellent paper, in the Rambler, on capital punishments, was written with the fate of poor Dodd in his view. This minister was a popular and fashionable preacher; and popularity and fashion are snares at all times, in all cases, but peculiarly so to the preacher. Horace Walpole, on one occasion, admired him in this capacity, saying that he harangued "very eloquently and touchingly," and his sermon, altogether, "a very pleasing performance;" it was difficult to extort praise of this kind from such a man. His idea of a preacher (and, too often, a true one) was identical with that of an actor; for of Whitfield he said, "Lord Chesterfield, Lord Bath, Lady Townsend,

* Vol. i. p. 63, 4th edit. of Sermons by Dr. Samuel Ogden, 1788.

Lady Thanet, and others, have been to hear him; nor shall I wonder if next winter *he is run after instead of Garrick!*" Of Wesley, too: "Wesley is a clean, elderly man, fresh colored, his hair smoothly combed, but with a little *soupçon* of curl at the ends; wondrous clever, but as *evidently an actor as Garrick.*" While of his sermon he says, "There were parts and eloquence in it; but toward the end he exalted his voice, *and acted very vulgar enthusiasm.*" The epithets of "wondrous clever" must have been quite as inappropriate to Wesley as the charge of mere acting. Dr. Dodd had probably much of the actor about him; and we may suppose that Dr. Johnson would neither like his manner nor the matter of his sermons, neither did he think well of his character; so that the very great trouble which he went through in his behalf redounds the more to the credit of his extraordinary humanity; indeed, misfortune at once insured the sympathy and kind efforts of Dr. Johnson. In one case he thought well of Dodd's honesty; for when this man's friends were attempting to console him by saying that he was going to leave "a wretched world," he had honesty enough not to join in the cant. "No, no," said he, "it has been a very agreeable world to me." Johnson added, "I respect Dodd for thus speaking the truth."

Another batch of divines and laity came under Johnson's criticisms. Sir John Hawkins tells us: "Hooker he admired for his logical precision, Sanderson for his acuteness, and Taylor for his amazing erudition; Sir Thomas Browne for his penetration, and Cowley for the ease and unaffected structure of his periods. The tinsel of Sprat disgusted him, and he could but just endure the smooth verbosity of Tillotson. Hammond and Barrow he thought involved: and of the latter, that he was unnecessarily prolix."

Croker thinks it may be doubted whether Hawkins has accurately preserved the characteristic qualities which Johnson attributed to these illustrious men; and certainly, those best acquainted with their writings may justly hold the same opinion.

Of Hooker, "this meek, this matchless man," as Isaac Walton calls him, him of the dove-like temper, little need be

said, for his works are patent to all mankind, and we can not conceive the age or state of the world when they will not be read, and the man himself be "freshly remembered." "There are in them such seeds of eternity," observed the Pope to Dr. Stapleton, "they shall last till the last fire shall consume all learning."* He possessed, truly, a quiet and capacious soul. And how mildly does he, the foremost controversialist, the opponent of the eloquent and more impetuous Travers, say of himself, "I take no joy in striving; I have not been trained up in it:" and again, he prays, "that no strife may ever be heard of again, but this, who shall hate strife most, also shall pursue peace and unity with swiftest paces." And "how mournful," he observes, "is that saying of Gregory Nazianzen, 'The only godliness we glory in, is to find out somewhat whereby we may judge others to be ungodly! Each other's faults we observe, as matters of exprobation, and not of grief.'" It is a great comfort that the writings of Hooker, unlike those of South or Atterbury, may be placed in the hands of dissenters without the least likelihood of giving offense to the most sensitive or querulous, just as we would put Sir Isaac Newton's works in the way of those who might not comprehend the wisdom of his discoveries. And no man should lift his voice against the church, or any ceremony or custom of the church, until he has first read and weighed in his mind the arguments of Hooker: to do otherwise would be manifestly unfair and injudicious. Far more than mere "logical precision" is to be admired in the pages of the Ecclesiastical Polity, and well doth the modern poet† sing of him,

> "Voice of the meekest man!
> Now, while the church for combat arms,
> Calmly do thou confirm her awful ban;
> Thy words to her be conquering, soothing charms."

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* It was said of Padre Paulo, Sir Henry Wotton's (when embassador to the state of Venice) dear friend, and the man whom Bishop Sanderson desired to see, "as one of the late miracles of general learning, prudence, and modesty"—one who was of invincible bashfulness, that he was "a man whose fame must never die, till virtue and learning shall become so useless as not to be regarded."—*Walton's Lives.*

† Isaac Williams, a true sacred poet. See "The Cathedral."

The events of Sanderson's life would have caused him to be a friend of Johnson's, and, like Johnson himself, he was in great poverty while writing some of his noblest compositions. We are told of his biographer meeting him "accidentally in London, in sad-colored clothes," at the very time he was publishing his "large and bold" preface to his Sermons, a grand defense of the Episcopal clergy against the censures of the Puritans. He lived in a time when, says the amiable Walton, "in London all the bishops' houses were turned to be prisons, and they filled with divines that would not take the Covenant, or forbear reading Common Prayer," &c.; and when "all the corners of the earth were filled with Covenanters, confusion, committee-men, and soldiers, serving each other to their several ends, of revenge, or power, or profit." In these days there were needless and fierce debates, about free-will, election, reprobation, predestination, antichrist, extempore prayers, &c. &c., but very little practice of humility, charity, sincerity, and single-heartedness: so that Laud well said, "We have lost the substance of religion by changing it into opinion;" and good Isaac Walton writes,* "When I look back upon the ruin of families, the bloodshed, the *decay of common honesty*, and how the *former piety and plain dealing* of this now sinful nation is turned into cruelty and cunning, I praise God that He prevented me from being of that party which helped to bring in this Covenant, and those sad confusions that have followed it." And such would be the case again were the candlestick of the church removed out of its place. In Wales, at the present time, wherein dissent so rampantly prevails, we are told by Her Majesty's commissioners, deputed to inquire into the state of education, that the people will talk and wrangle for hours on questions of baptismal regeneration, election, &c., and yet be mersed in the greatest ignorance, and be living in defiance of all rules of morality and charity. So that when the Honorable Baptist Noel predicts a sort of spiritual millennium for the church on its separation from the state, and says,† "Sound doctrine will then be heard from most of the Anglican

* Life of Sanderson, edit. 1823, p. 316.

† Mr. Noel's Essay, p. 627, &c.

pulpits, schisms will be mitigated," &c., we may beg leave to dissent from his prospective views, and, with the pages of past history and present evidence before us, rather believe that such sound, and hearty, and undefiled religion as now prevails in the Church of England, would rarely be witnessed again; and that the old clergy would be found to be the Hookers and Sandersons, the meek and matchless men of the new times. How often do men disregard the peril of extremes! and thus Sanderson notes it as a thing observed, that "in those counties (Lancashire for one) where there are the most, and the most rigid Presbyterians, there are also the most, and the most zealous Roman Catholics."

He was a casuistical divine of so much eminence, that persons used to resort to him to solve cases of conscientious difficulty; and Charles the First, who was never absent from his sermons, would say: "I carry my ears to hear other preachers; but I carry my conscience to hear Mr. Sanderson, and to act accordingly:" and when, in his last attendance, the king requested him to "betake himself to the writing cases of conscience for the good of posterity," and he answering that "he was now grown too old, and unfit to write cases of conscience;" the king was so bold with him as to say: "It was the simplest (taken in the old sense) answer he ever heard from Dr. Sanderson; *for no young man was fit to be a judge, or write cases of conscience.*" Dr. Johnson himself, it will be remembered by the way, was no mean casuist.

It is supposed, that Sanderson wrote the Preface to the Book of Common Prayer, a composition admirable for its moderation and just reasoning. But what strikes most in the lives of these eminent men who passed their time amid so much trouble, opposition, and danger, is the extraordinary spirit of kindness and humility with which they were endued; truly showing us that *affliction is a divine diet,* and that in adversity more than in prosperity the soul is confirmed. Thus we hear this pious bishop thanking God, "that He hath made me of a temper not apt to provoke the meanest of mankind:" and we read also with what complacency he took the rude and violent conduct of the Parliamentary sol-

diers, when they tore the Book of Prayer from him, "pretending to advise him how God was to be served most acceptably." Moreover, how beautiful the story of his compassion for the poor farmer that came to him, and his bountiful kindness to the poor, when he could afford them aid: and his biographer states, that "his looks and motion manifested affability and mildness;" and speaks of him at the last, as "this pattern of meekness and primitive innocence." Closely must he have followed, and in an age of agitation and personal vituperation, the exhortation of his sweet contemporary Bishop Hall, as quoted from St. Ambrose, "Imitate ye the angels, who, though peers of heaven, yet are wont to approve themselves *ministering spirits for the poorest of God's saints:* no spectacle can be more odious than a proud prelate."

Who can sufficiently speak the praises of Jeremy Taylor, his universal learning, his charitable disposition; the Shakspeare of the Church of England, whose glory it was to be thought a Christian, and who was a zealous son of the Church of England, "because he judged her a church the most purely Christian of any in the world?" And *he was a Christian:* such a Christian as Heber, and Wesley, and men of piety in all sects, have delighted to follow: and of how much eloquent exhortation to religious doctrine and conduct is a man deprived who has not yet drawn from this well of purity and learning! He and his little fortune were shipwrecked in that great hurricane that overturned both church and state; but in a private corner of the world he was fed with manna from heaven. Ere this, it is related of his preaching, "he made his hearers take him for some young angel, newly descended from the visions of glory;" and after he was a bishop, we read, that "his soul was made up of harmony, and he never spake but he charmed his hearer." "I believe," says Dr. Rust, his affectionate friend and chaplain, "he spent the greatest part of his time in heaven: his solemn hours of prayer took up a considerable portion of his life;" and, "notwithstanding his stupendous parts and learning, and eminency of place, he had nothing in him of pride and humor, but was courteous and affable, and

of easy access, and would lend a ready ear to the complaints, yea, to the impertinencies, of the meanest persons." "*The Life of Christ*," and the "*Holy Living*," and "*Holy Dying*," are become household books, most popular as most precious: and we can not but think that from these, and the writings of such like divines, Dr. Johnson's religious character was much assisted in its formation and subsequent growth.

The tinsel of Sprat disgusted him; and yet, in his memoir of him, Johnson speaks well of his talent. The principles of Sprat were perhaps too much of that kind attributed to the Vicar of Bray. He stood neuter at a time when he should have declared for the church: in turn he eulogized Cromwell, and spoke "manfully" for James; and he had to endure much from villains who endeavored to implicate him in a pretended conspiracy. "Burnet was not favorable to his memory," says Johnson, "for he was jealous of the congregational approbation awarded him." As the friend of Bishop Wilkins, and author of the "History of the Royal Society," as well as of the "Life of Cowley," he is best known, while his "Sermons" are almost forgotten.

Hammond and Barrow he thought "involved," but still both of these are great names in the church; the one argumentative and close, the other profound, and showing a vast reach of mind, prolix as regards the repetition of hard and earnest words. The early part of Hammond's life, when incumbent of Penshurst, where he became, according to Bishop Fell, a perfect model of the English country parson, was pleasant and undisturbed; but after that he had become the steady and affectionate chaplain of Charles the First, he became involved in the troubles, anxieties, and deprivations that awaited the faithful adherents of that unfortunate monarch. His principles were strict Church of England, and when he saw the Romish missionaries successful in drawing many "to a pompous and imperious church abroad from an afflicted one at home," then he wrote able treatises against them; while, on the other hand, when the errors of conflicting Protestant sects, by the charm of novelty, drew in many of the rash and ignorant, then his exertions were directed against that opposite quarter of schismatic action.

Like Dr. Johnson, he wrote whole articles without ever raising his pen from the paper till they were finished: in such manner he wrote his famous tract on *Episcopacy*, begun after ten o'clock at night, and sent to press the next morning: and also his tract on *Scandal*, commenced at eleven o'clock, and finished before he went to bed. His best known work is his *Annotations*, so frequently consulted by all commentators: and we are told that his elocution was free and graceful; King Charles, no mean judge, giving him the character of being "the most natural orator he had ever heard." The bitter and fierce Presbyterian, Cheynell, he who delivered that barbarous oration over the remains of Chillingworth, was his opponent; whose mind was the reverse of the rational, calm, and manly one of this learned doctor, whose pure and active spirit, we are informed, was becomingly lodged in a body remarkable for beauty and strength.

Hammond just lived to witness the Restoration, but seemed unwilling to exchange his adversity and affliction for the coming events of joy and prosperity. His serene mind jumped not at the advantages of a high station and large responsibility; on the contrary, he said, "I never saw the time in all my life wherein I could so cheerfully say my *Nunc Dimittis* as now." Soon he died a saint-like death, but a few minutes before his departure breathing out these words, "Lord, make haste!"

Barrow, whom the historian Hallam esteems to be second in learning only to Taylor, ought to have been a prime favorite with Dr. Johnson. He was, corporeally and mentally, the stalwart scholar. So pugnacious was he at school, that his father used to say, that if it pleased God to deprive him of either of his sons, he hoped it would be Isaac! Unlike Hammond, the early part of his life was hardy and adventurous. He traveled extensively, and at Constantinople, the See of Chrysostom, he read the works of that "golden mouth," whom he preferred to all the other Fathers. In this voyage his fighting qualities were called into vigorous action, for the ship was attacked by a corsair, and Barrow left not the deck till the pirate was beaten back. On his return, the ship in

which he sailed took fire, and, with its cargo, was utterly consumed, but no lives were lost. He visited Paris, Florence, Leghorn, Smyrna, Constantinople, Venice, Germany, Holland, &c., a grand tour indeed in those times. He possessed great learning, derived from the best sources, and his eloquence in the pulpit was brilliant. He had one fault, "if it deserves that name," says Dr. Pope, "he was generally too long in his sermons;" he preached three hours and a half on bounty to the poor; "and now," he adds, "I have spoken as ill of him as the worst of his enemies could, *if ever he had any.*" Charles the Second called him "an unfair preacher," because he left nothing for those that came after him to say; in fact. he liked to treat thoroughly on any subject he took in hand, He was a man of the purest morals, and gentlest manners, ever despising riches and honors, and such things as might have fallen to his lot in these more prosperous times, and which so many other men covet and desire. He was careless and slovenly in his person, even in the pulpit: very severe to himself, "unmercifully cruel to a lean carcass, not allowing it sufficient meat or sleep:" and at last, though Master of Trinity College, Cambridge, yet he died in mean lodgings at a saddler's near Charing Cross, an old, low, ill-built house, which he had used for several years, continuing the same erudite and humble-minded person all through life. His treatise on the *Pope's Supremacy*, and his *Sermons* and *Expositions*, are of lasting fame. If Johnson had been questioned on the merits of these divines, his criticisms would, we may think, have done them ample justice: and it is not fair to receive, as his judgment, an extemporaneous conversation, probably inaccurately reported.

Come we to a trio of "immortals." When talking of the Irish clergy, he said, "Swift was a man of great parts, and the instrument of much good to his country; Berkeley was a profound scholar, as well as a man of fine imagination; but Ussher," he said, "was the great luminary of the Irish church: and a greater," he added, "no church could boast of, at least in modern times."

Unlike Jeremy Taylor, who "was a man long before he was of age," Swift was backward in learning during his early

youth. The history of this extraordinary man, with a character and genius most puzzling, need not be entered upon here, since it is given by Johnson himself in a volume so easily procured. His "Church of England Man" was, in some degree, a picture of himself. His "Tale of a Tub" of which Bishop Smalridge, when Dr. Sacheverel complimented him on being the author, said, "Not all that you and I have in the world, nor all that ever we shall have, should hire me to write The Tale of a Tub"—of this book, Dr. Johnson doubts whether Swift was really the author, although, when the belief of its authorship stood in they way of his becoming a bishop, he contradicted it not. Johnson says, speaking of the style, "What is true of that, is not true of any thing else which he has written." It is certain, however, that it is his production.

To his duties, as a clergyman, he was attentive, and put many things in order in his church which were before neglected. He complained of himself, that from the time of his political controversies "he could only preach pamphlets," a complaint, observes Johnson, which was "unreasonably severe," if we may judge from those sermons which have been printed. The suspicions of his irreligion, we are told, arose from his dread of hypocrisy, and thus, in London, he went to early prayers, lest he should be seen at church; and read prayers to his servants every morning "with such dextrous secrecy, that Dr. Delany was six months in his house before he knew it." "He was not only careful," continues Johnson, "to hide the good which he did, but willingly incurred the suspicion of evil which he did not;" and it is somewhat disingenuously added, the sentiment being open to much animadversion, "he forgot what himself had formerly asserted, that hypocrisy is less mischievous than open impiety." We must not suppose from this remark that his memory was deficient, for, though Pope says,

> "Where beams of warm imagination play,
> The memory's soft figures melt away."

He was blessed with an astounding memory; so much so, as to be able to repeat the lines of Hudibras from the beginning

to the end. He was a man of great humanity, but always fidgety during meal times; the meat was always too much or too little done, or the servants offended in a manner not perceptible to the rest of the company, nor did he spare the servants of others. Once when he dined alone with the Earl of Orrery, he said of one that waited in the room, "That man has, since we sat at table, committed fifteen faults." Lord Orrery had not perceived them. Yet after dinner, he was himself again: and, always temperate in drinking, the feast of reason and the flow of soul were in full exuberance: his wit and learning, his humor and warmth of affection, informing, extracting from, and winning all. It is singular that he, our English Rabelais, whose *bon mots* exist in constant conversational quotation to this day, and whose name is so familiar, as connected with dry and droll sayings, among members of nearly all classes of people, should himself have "stubbornly resisted any tendency to laughter," and possessed a countenance "sour and severe, which he seldom softened by any appearance of gayety," while his writings abound in ludicrous ideas, and his reputation for humor and wit was at once universally famous and infamous.

Bishop Berkeley was indeed a profound scholar, and one who has adorned the scientific character of this country. He is said to have been acquainted with almost all branches of human knowledge, and his character commanded the respect and love of all who knew him. Pope, his constant friend, describes him as possessed "of every virtue under heaven." His disinterestedness in endeavoring to establish a College in the Bermuda Islands for the conversion of the American savages to Christianity, and his patience in waiting in vain for the promised aid of Parliament, were most laudable. Johnson, who imperfectly apprehended the bishop's subtle reasoning, being in company with a gentleman who thought fit to maintain Dr. Berkeley's ingenious philosophy, that nothing exists but as perceived by some mind: when the gentleman was going away, Johnson said to him, "Pray, sir, don't leave us; for we may perhaps forget to think of you, *and then you will cease to exist.*" Another time he confuted Berkeley's idea of non-existence of matter, by stamping vigorously on

the ground; and, in short, he seems to have been somewhat of the opinion so flippantly expressed by the modern poet,

> "When Bishop Berkeley said there was no matter,
> In truth it was no matter what he said." *

Certainly his hypothesis, that those things which are called *sensible material objects* are not external, but exist in the mind, is an enigma to the non-metaphysical student, and is supported by an ingenuity which it is difficult to refute, although we think we can so readily deny its truth. Let us ask ourselves, What is darkness? What is death? We may answer: The absence of light; the absence of life; but can we consider either darkness or death as real beings? Can the absence of any thing have a real existence? or *nothing* be as real in natural existence as *any thing*?

Bishop Berkeley's opinion of Atterbury, we may understand sooner than the arcana of his metaphysics, namely, that he was "a most learned, fine gentleman, who under the softest and politest appearance concealed the most turbulent ambition."

Archbishop Ussher was another of those great and good men who were sorely afflicted during political and ecclesiastical periods of trouble and dismay. He was born near the time that the excellent Sir Henry Sidney wrote to Queen Elizabeth, "that upon the face of the earth, where Christ is professed, there is not a church" (he means that of Ireland) "in so miserable a case:" yet, when he was but eighteen years of age, at his father's death, he made over the paternal estate, which was considerable, to his younger brother, and himself studied for the ministry of the church. He was always of a Calvinistic turn of mind, caught from the prevailing temper of the age: his notions also of church government verging toward Presbyterianism, his enemies, taking advantage of this, sought to undermine his credit with James the First. But no, he was always a steady Church of England man, supporting the kingly supremacy; and on coming to England

* Is not this an old play of words borrowed from a paper called the *Connoisseur?*

on one occasion, he was furnished with testimonials to the king by the Lord Deputy and Council, in which he was described as "abounding in goodness, and his life and doctrine so agreeable, that those who agree not with him are constrained to admire him." He wrote against the great republican poet, Milton · he endeavored to prevent Charles the First from sacrificing Lord Strafford, and was the affectionate friend and pious counselor of that lamented nobleman to the last: he carried the message to Laud by which the archbishop, from his prison window, was enabled, with uplifted hands, to bless Strafford on his way to death: and he was in such an agony at the sight of King Charles on the scaffold, as to be unable to bear the affecting scene any longer.* These are circumstances in his history that would serve to exalt him in the eyes of Johnson; and most steadily, even to the spoiling of his goods, and the extreme hazard of his person, did this evangelical man of God stand by the church and his king. We learn from Evelyn's diary, that he once said to that even-minded man, "that the church would be destroyed by sectaries, who would, in all likelihood, bring in Popery." He was a supporter of the strenuous rule of Vincent of Lirins, for he says, "We bring in no new faith, no new church. That which in the time of the ancient Fathers was accounted to be truly and properly Catholic, viz., that which was believed *every where, always, and by all:* that in the succeeding ages hath evermore been preserved, and is in this day entirely professed in our church." Well would it be if our modern evangelicals (so called), who so cordially give the

* At a future time, when he was lying ill in his retirement, a member of the Parliament came to visit him, to whom he said in a solemn manner: "Sir, you see I am very weak, and can not expect to live many hours. You are returning to the Parliament—*I am going to God.* I charge you to tell them from me, that I know they are in the wrong, and have dealt very injuriously with the king." He always commemorated this sad event by an anniversary celebration of funeral rites.

The above anecdote brings to one's mind another, of the pious Archbishop Leighton. When a young man, and a Presbyterian, he attended a synod where the clergy were asked if they preached to the times? He being accused of rather not doing so. He replied, "Surely, if all of you preach to the times, might not one poor brother be allowed to preach for eternity?"

right hand of welcome and fellowship to Archbishop Ussher, would also embrace, and act according to this large-hearted and unsectarian rule.

The fact is, Ussher was well acquainted with the writings of the early Fathers. We are told, that suspecting the accuracy of a work put forward by a Roman Catholic divine (Stapleton), which was accounted a book of very high repute, he resolved to read through all the writings of the Fathers; and this laborious task he commenced at the age of twenty, and, persevering with a certain portion daily, completed it at the time he was thirty-eight. This was of such use to him, that it bore him in safety through a controversy with a distinguished Jesuit, who courteously styled him "the most learned of the non-Catholics."

He was put forward by the clergy to intercede with Cromwell for a withdrawal of his cruel and arbitrary declaration issued in 1655, but was unsuccessful, Cromwell being advised by his council, "that *it was not safe to grant liberty of conscience* to those men whom he deemed restless and implacable enemies to his government." This refusal greatly affected the humane archbishop; and to his friends, who awaited his return, he broke out in severe invectives against the Protector, and mournfully predicted the advantage which Popery would draw from the confusion in church and state. It is just to record, that, on his death, which was calm and resigned, Cromwell ordered that the body should be deposited, with public honors, in Westminster Abbey; and, on the day of the funeral, it was met by the clergy and a great concourse of the people, who accompanied it, with weeping, to the abbey.

Burnet says, that "he was certainly one of the greatest and best men that the age, or perhaps the world, has produced;" and describes him as expressing "in his conversation the true simplicity of a Christian; for passion, pride, self-will, or the love of the world, seemed not to be so much as in his nature. He had a way of gaining people's hearts, and of touching their consciences, that looked like somewhat of the Apostolic age revived." He effected much for the Irish church, in conjunction with Bramhall; and was, indeed, not only its lumin-

ary, but of the world also, probably to the end of the time of the Christian dispensation. We can not help observing what pure, pious, and memorable names are united in deep lamentation on the death of Charles the First; and we can imagine that Ussher himself might have mournfully and emphatically exclaimed,

> "I saw a royal form with eye upturn'd,
> Rising from furnace of affliction free,
> And knew that brow of deep serenity,
> Whereon, methought, a crown of glory burn'd,
> With a calm smile, as if the death-cry turned
> On his freed ear to seraph sounds on high!" *

As commentators, Dr. Johnson recommended Lowth and Patrick on the Old Testament, and Hammond on the New. The attempt of the former to show a manifest conformity between the prophetical style and that of the books supposed to be metrical, has met with the approbation of the learned; and the observations of Patrick are sound and full, frequently quoted by Bishop Mant and Dr. D'Oyley in their more comprehensive commentary on the Scriptures. It is gratifying to find that Bishop Patrick's "Parable of the Pilgrim" is becoming a popular book, for it is at once entertaining and instructive. Hammond's Annotations on the Psalms are very valuable, and so are those on the New Testament; but he is thought to be mistaken, in some, of his criticisms, by Dr. Doddridge, who observes, "he finds the Gnostics every where." This leads him to consider Simon Magus as the "Man of Sin," and not to regard several denunciations as applying to the Church of Rome. We may not believe that Doddridge can determine this point more than Hammond, and surely the last is the most learned commentator.

On another occasion, Dr. Johnson commended Whitby's Commentary. This is usually accounted to be the best upon the New Testament that is existent in the English language. He can not view the Church of Rome as connected with the Man of Sin, but differs from Hammond, in accounting it to be the Jewish nation with their high-priest and Sanhedrim. He offers no commentary on the Book of

* Isaac Williams.

Revelations, very wisely saying, that he can not understand "the intendment of the prophecies." It is to be observed, that Calvin also offered no written comment on the Revelation; but Dr. South went too far in his love of wit, when he averred, "That book either finds a man mad, or makes him so."

In reference to individual divines in more chronological order, we find Dr. Johnson speaking favorably, as all religious persons must do, of Thomas à Kempis. It "must be a good book," he observed, "as the world has opened its arms to receive it. It is said to have been printed, in one language or other, as many times as there have been months since it first came out. I was always struck with this sentence in it, 'Be not angry that you can not make others as you wish them to be, since you can not make yourself as you wish to be.'" Yes, and of the same veritably catholic, but un-Roman Catholic spirit, is the following admirable sentence, which Dr. Johnson, who liked not bitterness in controversy, would also have loved: "What will it avail thee to dispute profoundly of the Trinity, if thou be void of humanity, and thereby displeasing to the Trinity? High words, surely, make a man neither holy nor just; but a virtuous life maketh him dear to God. *I had rather feel compunction, than understand the definition thereof.* If thou didst know the whole Bible by heart, and the sayings of all the philosophers, what would all that profit thee, without charity, and the grace of God?" Violence in controversy, on ever so just a side, is always impolitic, as well as unseemly; hence, very trite was the observation of George the Third to Dr. Johnson, on the difference between Lowth and Warburton, "Why truly," said the king, "when once it comes to calling names, argument is pretty well at an end."

Thomas à Kempis's book is indeed glorious throughout, so filled with self-denial, and so spiritual. It is said to be the book of largest circulation next to the Bible, and to be found in nearly all countries. A Wesleyan Methodist once said to to me, "Sir, I owe my conversion to the reading the book of Thomas à Kempis;" but he did not join the communion of that church of which his converter was so great an orna-

ment; thus wisely showing that we are not bound to tie ourselves to those who may first serve to imbue our minds with principles of religion. Strange that Dr. Johnson should not have more highly esteemed Bossuet, Massillon, and Bourdaloue; he would not allow *them* "to go round the world." And quite as strange, yet worthily liberal, is it, to find the Presbyterian Boswell entering his *strongest* protest against Dr. Johnson's judgment in regard to the former: "Bossuet," he says, "I hold to be one of the first luminaries of religion and literature. *If there are who do not read him, it is full time they should begin.*"

Of Grotius, the religious and political hero of Holland, Dr. Johnson entertained a high opinion. He classed him among the great men who had embraced the Christian religion as *the truth*, and thus given an additional evidence in its favor. "Grotius was an acute man," he said, "a lawyer, a man accustomed to examine evidence, and he was convinced." Of his writings, he said, "I would recommend to every man whose faith is yet unsettled, GROTIUS, Dr. Pearson, and Dr. Clarke." And again: "Richard Baxter commends a treatise by Grotius, '*De Satisfactione Christi*;' I have never read it, but I intend to read it; and you (Boswell) may read it." And when recommending an old friend (De Groot) to the benevolence of the Rev. Dr. Vyse, he writes, "He is by several descents the nephew of Hugo Grotius, of him from whom perhaps, *every man of learning has learned something*. Let it not be said, that in *any lettered country a nephew of Grotius asked a charity and was refused.*

A more comprehensive mind than that of Grotius never existed; and this comprehensiveness founded, not on vague, latitudinarian, or reckless opinions, but on the basis of learning the most profound, and charity the most enlightened and sincere. It is creditable to find his works studied at our English universities, and thus our age may well be congratulated on its retrospective character. With his political life, whether as occupying a high post in the government of his country, or as embassador from Sweden to the court of France, seconding the views of the renowned Swedish Grand Chancellor, Oxenstiern, and disliked by Cardinal Richelieu,

we have little now to do; it is in his religious character that we must regard him. His main aspirations were after an universal, an ancient, and a loving church. From every school of philosophy, and from every society in the world of opinion, he would gather some important truth, while he rejected much prominent or latent error; and thus to know and discern the seminal principle of every prophet and leader of a sect, was, with him, to gather the wisdom of the world. Such a man, with a mind of this universal and truthful grasp, is often looked upon, by the earnest and narrow-minded, as one heedless of principle and undecided. Neither Owen nor Baxter could appreciate the elevation or amplitude of his religious views, because "he endeavored to reunite the fragments of truth scattered among all parties—and thus had the honor to displease every party that wished to make him its exclusive proselyte."* It could not be deciphered, whether he were Arminian or Calvinist, or even Papist; and hence the lines,

> "Papists, Lutherans, Arminians,
> Arians, Calvinists, Socinians,
> All contend for Grotius' name,
> All conspire to raise his fame."

This is honorable testimony indeed; and we read, that he was disposed to conciliate all the pious Roman Catholics, as well as the Protestants, and the more because others were endeavoring to augment ecclesiastical divisions.

It may be well to give an extract or two from his admirable plea for ecclesiastical peace, which furnished Bossuet and Wake with some of their best hints on the project of harmonizing the Gallican and British churches, reported at the end of Mosheim's Ecclesiastical History. He says that, after receiving many lessons from persons who held a great variety of doctrines on religious subjects, "I early felt the importance of our Saviour's counsel, that all who would be called after His name, and who would enjoy beatitude through His mediation, should be of one spirit, as He and His Father

* Barham: who says, "the religion of Grotius;" from its toleration, "became a problem to many, which Baxter endeavored in vain to solve."

were one. Nor of one spirit only so far as charity is concerned, but also as respects the communion of faith and the bond of discipline. *For the church is, or ought to be one, and one body!*"

Again: "At length I understood more fully, both from the books and the conversations of our elders, that men had arisen who stated that the Catholic Church and the Protestant differed altogether in principle no less than in practice; and that these not merely deserted the ancient community without endeavoring to bring about reconciliation by the removal of ungrateful abuses, but some, even before their excommunication, instituted *novel congregations, which they ventured to nominate churches*, and in these appointed new-fashioned presbyteries, and administered irregular sacraments, and that in many places against all the edicts of kings and of bishops, saying, forsooth, by way of defense, *that they had authority from heaven like the apostles of old, and that they ought to obey God rather than men.*" How often was it the case with our own Puritans, that they laid claim to sources of power which never could be investigated, and thus the well-known pertinent answer of Cromwell to the inquiring Quaker was richly deserved.

Grotius complained of the numerous sects of dissenters. "So many new dissenters sprung up every day, that no man alive would undertake to number or count them. And as this new brood is exceeding fruitful, as every one believes he has as good a right to coin his own creed as his neighbors before him, it is probable that innumerable schismatics will yet arise." And how grand is his calm resolve: "All this displeased me beyond measure, especially when I saw that these new parties carried their vote rather by riotous clamor than by any solid argument; *and so I turned me to the reading of such authors who live apart in divine communions, devoting their talent rather to heal than to aggravate our dissensions.*"

Erasmus, who was in much the counterpart of Grotius, ridicules the number of sects, and their flimsy quiddities and reasonings, as existent in the Romish church, such as the Realists, the Nominalists, the Thomists, the Albertists, the

Occamists, the Scotists,* &c.; "in each of which there is so much of deep learning, so much of unfathomable difficulty, that I believe the Apostles themselves would stand in need of a new illuminating spirit if they were to engage in any controversy with these new divines." These would maintain it to be a less aggravating fault to kill a hundred men, than for a poor cobbler to set a stitch on the Sabbath day; these entertain one with all kinds of notions, formalities, and abstrusities, when the Apostles baptized all nations without ever teaching what was the *formal, material, efficient,* and *final cause* of Baptism; they administered the Holy Sacrament, and yet could give no answer to the *terminus a quo*, and the *terminus ad quem*, in the nature of Transubstantiation.† So difficult is it, *within or out* of the pale of the church, to keep men from setting up their own opinions as of first importance, and to preserve them in the fold of a large and loving church, without peculiarities, and without divisions.

Grotius expected, we are told, that his works, which were compiled solely with a view to promote union among Christians, would procure him many enemies; and he said, on this occasion, "that for persons to endeavor to make mankind live in peace was commendable; that they might indeed expect a recompense from the blessed peace-maker, but that they had great reason to apprehend the same fate with those who, attempting to part two combatants, receive blows from both; but if it should so happen, I shall comfort myself with the example of him who said, 'If I please men, I am not the servant of Christ.'"

Archbishop Bramhall‡ nobly defends Grotius against the insinuations and accusations of Baxter, to the effect that under pretense of reconciling the Protestant churches with the Roman church, he acted "the coy-duck, willingly, or unwillingly, to lead Protestants into Popery." But such was far from the case, as proved by the archbishop in opposing Baxter's feeble suppositions on this matter of Grotian designs. Grotius and Baxter, we understand, both prosecuted

* Panegyric upon Folly, 5th edit. p. 111.

† See the whole passage, p. 111, 112.

‡ Bramhall's Works, Oxford edit. vol. iii. p. 505, &c.

the same design of reconciliation, but Mr. Baxter's object was the British world, and that of Grotius was the Christian world; and the archbishop, speaking of three great writers, one of whom was Grotius, says, "I do prefer these three before a hundred yawning wishers for peace, while they do nothing that tendeth to the procuring of peace." And he gives this opinion, which may not be quite so applicable to the present times: "Excuse me for telling the truth plainly; many who have had their education among sectaries or nonconformists, have apostated to Rome, but few or no right episcopal divines. Hot water freezeth the soonest."

Not all that Grotius held, did Bramhall approve. Of his book of the Right of the Sovereign Magistrates in Sacred Things, he says: "But when I did read it, it seemed to me to come too near an Erastian, and to lessen the power of the keys too much, which Christ left as a legacy to His Church." The high churchman here likes not too much exaltation of the union of the state with the church, because he sees that the former would take away, in great measure, the power of the latter. Strange, that dissenters should desire to see the church uncontrolled by the public opinion embodied in the state. And so the archbishop will not pin his religion to any of their sleeves, saying: "Plato is my friend, and Socrates is my friend, but Truth is my best friend."

He shows, however, that Grotius "was in affection a friend, and in desire a true son of the Church of England; and upon his death-bed recommended that church, *as it was legally established*, to his wife, and such other of his family as were then about him, obliging them by his authority to adhere firmly to it, so far as they had opportunity;" and after telling how they obeyed this injunction, the archbishop says: "If any man think, that he knoweth Grotius his mind better by conjectural consequences than he did himself, or that he would dissemble with his wife and children upon his death-bed, he may enjoy his own opinion to himself, but he will find few to join with him."

Henry Newton, embassador extraordinary from the Queen of England to the Grand Duke of Tuscany, in his letters to Barcelinus, Le Clerc, &c., acquaints us with the attachment

of Grotius to the Church of England, to which church he would have openly conformed, had time permitted. He thought the more worthily of the Reformation in England, "because they who undertook that holy work admitted of nothing new, nothing of their own, but had their eyes wholly fixed upon another world." He advised his friends in Holland to take holy orders from our bishops, and desired that the Remonstrants should appoint bishops among themselves, and receive the laying on of hands "from the Irish archbishop who is there," evidently alluding to Bramhall. He writes, "The English Liturgy was always accounted the best by all learned men:" and also it is said of him by Newton, "Body and soul he professeth himself to be for the Church of England; and gives this judgment of it, that it is the likeliest to last of any church this day in being."* How satisfied ought all members of the Church of England to be, when they find the Continental Reformers (Calvin, Beza, &c., among the number), ever envying the episcopal order existing among the English Reformers! and the true secret of the continuance and success of the English church is to be found in Jewell's resolve: "We undertake to show that the most glorious gospel of God, and the ancient bishops, and the primitive church, are on our side."†

This is the character given of Grotius by Archbishop Bramhall: "It shall suffice me to say, that he was a person of rare parts, of excellent learning, of great charity; and of so exemplary a life, that his fiercest adversaries had nothing to object against him of moment, but were forced to rake into the faults of his family; which, whether true or false, was not so ingenuously done." And when Baxter softens down in regard to Arminian charges against Grotius, and finds in general that "most of our contentions are more about words than matter," the archbishop exquisitely says, "I see Truth is the daughter of Time."

There was another great man who appreciated the talents

* See Le Clerc, at the end of Grotius's "Truth of the Christian Religion."

† Bishop Jewell's "apology," &c., recommended in 30th canon of the church.

and loved the disposition of Grotius, and that man was Milton. His ADAMUS EXUL is accounted the drama which laid the foundation of our own poet's immortal PARADISE LOST. Of modern minds those of Guizot and Dr. Arnold seem most to be in accordance with his own. Both would unite all that is true, quite apart from that indifferentism which would countenance the true in union with that which is false. Both have evidently listened to the noble and loving voices of Erasmus, Cassander, Calixtus, Leibnitz, and Schlegel, and both like him have failed in meeting with a successful issue to their comprehensive plans of true fraternization. It appears Guizot was not so warm an advocate as Dr. Arnold of the union of church and state, for although he thinks France* has been the centre from which European civilization has emanated, yet he supposes it impossible that the state should live according to the example of the church, and that the people of the state should be as one with the people of the church; in other words, he thinks, contrary to Arnold, that the state would rather secularize the church, than the church evangelize the state. This we mention by the way, for in fact Grotius, Guizot, and Arnold, would have been a noble trio in Christian philosophy, and agreed well in their love of social peace and good-will, established on Guizot's admired basis—the brotherhood of all men in the faith of Jesus Christ, and the equality of all men before God. But "Man," cries Cecil, "is a creature of extremes. Few are wise enough to find the middle path. Because Papists have made too much of some things, Protestants have made too little of them. The Popish heresy of human merit in justification, drove Luther, on the other side, into most unwarrantable and unscriptural statements of that doctrine. The Papists consider grace as inseparable from the participation of the Sacraments—the Protestants too often lose sight of them as instituted means of conveying grace." It is refreshing to find earnest and evangelical minds breaking forth in this way, "for it is a perilous employment," as Dr. Arnold writes,† "for

* Lectures on the Progress of Civilization, by M. Guizot. Democracy and its Mission, by M. Guizot.

† Preface to Sermons, vol. iii.

any man to be perpetually contemplating narrow-mindedness and weakness in conjunction with much of piety and goodness."

Lately there has sprung up one of Grotian spirit, except that he accepts not so fully the teaching of the Church of England: yet is he one of an earnest, thoughtful mind, eager for coalition. His main error—but then he is a young man—seems to be set forth in the idea that truth has not yet appeared in the world or the churches of the world; that the words "Lo, I am with you alway," ought rather to have been, "Lo, I shall be with you some time in the twentieth century, and Mr. George Dawson* is to be my pioneer and discoverer." But, notwithstanding this intellectual conceit, much that he speaks may be loved, and therefore let us hear him, when he is descanting on the blessing of unity rather than diversity of spirit. "Do we not know," he writes, "some families that read none but Baptist books: others, none but Unitarian tracts and writings: many who, in their narrow notions of sacred literature, study only the prophets of their own sect? They know nothing about others: they understand them not: they desire not to understand them. Nursed up in their own little, narrow apartment, they walk wearily round it, till they have left their footprint upon the stone of its floor. Should a wise man be brought up so? Shall I refuse to be taught by the holy words of Fénélon, because he belongs not to my sect or creed? Shall Jeremy Taylor have written eloquently, and Chrysostom of the 'golden mouth' have spoken and preached in vain for me, because I belong not to their communion? Verily, no! I accept with thankfulness all the good that God sends me, come from where it will. I believe in good men of every church."

And so did Dr. Johnson, albeit he most loved his own. Hear him speak of the next in succession, Dr. Watts. He

* George Dawson, Esq., M.A. Birmingham, author of "Demands of the Age upon the Church." This gentleman, like Southey, has commenced life as a lecturer; but whether he will further resemble Southey, remains yet to be seen. *Reading and reflection* are the two things that must inform and brace his mind; and he must take good heed to combat against the idea that *he* is to be a discoverer of the truth, when all the while the truth has been in the world.

says, "Dr. Watts was one of the first who taught the dissenters to write and speak like other men, by showing them that elegance might consist with piety." Again, when stating that he is to be included in the "Lives of the English Poets," he adds, "His name has long been held by me in veneration, and I would not willingly be reduced to tell of him only that he was born and died;" he therefore desires to be favored with every information about him, saying, "I wish to distinguish Watts, a man who never wrote but for a good purpose." Doctor Towers, the opponent of Dr. Johnson, says: "His life of Dr. Watts is written with great candor: and perhaps he might be the more inclined to do justice to that ingenious divine, though a dissenter, not only from respect for his piety, but also from some grateful remembrance of the assistance which he had received from his works in the compilation of his Dictionary."*

By referring to Johnson's memoir of this good man, we find how pleasantly thirty-six years of his life were spent under the same roof with the family of Sir Thomas Abney. Here, and Pliny might have envied him, "he had the privilege of a country recess, the fragrant bower, the spreading lawn, the flowery garden, and other advantages, to soothe his mind and aid his restoration to health." Here he continued to write and preach. "He did not endeavor," says his biographer, "to assist his eloquence by any gesticulations: for, as no corporeal actions have any correspondence with theological truth, he did not see how they could enforce it;" and of his writing he says, "Every man acquainted with the common principles of human action, will look with veneration on the writer, who is at one time combating Locke, and at another making a Catechism for children in their fourth year." Of his poetry, the great critic did not hold a high opinion, for he thought there was a difficulty about writing sacred poetry hardly to be overcome, therefore, he writes, "His devotional poetry is, like that of others, unsatisfactory:" and adds, "It is sufficient for Watts to have done better than others *what no man has done well*." And how

* Essay on the Life, Character, and Writings of Dr. Samuel Johnson, p. 89.

keenly and truly does Dr. Johnson discern the true orthodoxy of character, "It was not only in his book, but in his mind, that *orthodoxy* was *united* with *charity*." The italics are his own, and show how he loved love. He concludes by wishing the reader "to imitate him in all but his nonconformity, to copy his benevolence to man and his reverence to God." Alas, did not his nonconformity extend to a doubt, even in his last hours, of the first mystery of faith, the Trinity? Dr. Watts would probably have been the same pious, modest, inoffensive man, with whatever communion of Christians he had been connected. Indeed, there is much of Church of England temper and piety in his character, and we might imagine old Isaac Walton applauding the meekness of his life. In speaking of a book of Miscellanies in prose and verse, to which Watts evidently contributed some pieces, Dr. Johnson thus remarkably speaks of two (one of them was probably Watts) of the contributors, "They would both have done honor to a better society, for they had that charity which might well make their failings be forgotten, and *with which the whole Christian world wish for communion.* They were pure from all the heresies of an age, to which *every opinion is become a favorite that the universal church has hitherto detested!* Our friend George Dawson, and many less illustrious truth-mongers among upstart propagandists of modern discoveries, might well ponder thoughtfully on this last sentence, ever remembering what the immortal Dryden had before written,*

> "But since men will believe more than they need,
> *And every man will make himself a creed,*
> In doubtful questions 'tis the safest way
> To learn what unsuspected ancients say:
> *For 'tis not likely we should higher soar*
> *In search of heaven, than all the church before.*
> Nor can we be deceived, unless we see
> The Scripture and the Fathers disagree."

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* A Layman's Faith. Dryden's Works, vol. i. p. 409.

## CHAPTER XII.

### HIS CHURCHMANSHIP.

Dr. Johnson recommended "Bishop Bramhall on Liberty and Necessity." This is the answer to Hobbes. Predestination and free-will were subjects on which Dr. Johnson failed in speaking with his wonted positiveness: he could only say, "All theory is against the freedom of the will, all experience for it."* Archbishop Bramhall argues that the freedom of man is not inconsistent with God's eternal decrees, nor with His eternal prescience; and the following words, extracted from a large argument, at once take away much of the difficulty of a metaphysical subject, which must still remain, not contrary to, but above human reasoning: and therefore it is no wonder that we find Dr. Johnson's reverential mind retreating from collision with its immense profoundness. But hear Bramhall:† "As the decree of God is eternal, so is His knowledge; and therefore, to speak truly and properly,

* Dr. Shuttleworth has a fine sermon on this subject: it is the tenth in his "Sermons on some of the leading Principles of Christianity." This sentence remarkably agrees with Dr. Johnson's opinion, "The fact is certain, that, while the instinctive conviction of our breasts *announces to us that we are free*, the tendency of all our metaphysical inquiries, all that we can trace scientifically of the origin of our thoughts, and the motives of our conduct, gives a directly contrary conclusion, and as loudly *proclaims the necessity of man's actions*." From this extract we may suppose that the question is candidly investigated; and he shows that the existence of our free agency has been unequivocally declared by our Saviour himself; that St. Paul, also, is consistent with himself, and with the doctrine of his Almighty Master. "Ask yourselves," he exclaims, "whether that beautiful and energetic exhortation (12th and 13th Romans) to every moral and Christian excellence could possibly be the work of a man believing in the humiliating doctrine of strict moral necessity?"

† Bramhall's Works, vol. iv. p. 191.

*there is neither fore-knowledge nor after-knowledge in Him.* The knowledge of God comprehends all times in a point, by reason of the eminence and virtue of its infinite perfection. And yet I confess that this is called foreknowledge in respect of us. But *this foreknowledge doth produce no absolute necessity.* Things are not therefore because they are foreknown, but therefore they are foreknown because they shall come to pass. If any thing should come to pass otherwise than it doth, yet God's knowledge could not be irritated by it: for then He did not know that it should come to pass as He now doth, because every knowledge of vision necessarily presupposeth its object. God did know that Judas should betray Christ: *but Judas was not necessitated to be a traitor by God's knowledge.* If Judas had not betrayed Christ, then God had not foreknown that Judas should betray Him."

All who read Hobbes, Jonathan Edwards, and Calvin, should read this work of Bramhall's also. Alexander Knox says,* "I think, of few things I can be more sure, than that Calvinistic predestination is not in the Bible: *providential* predestination runs all through it: and a warm imagination, when once the idea was taken up, made it easy to transmute the one into the other." The Church of England in her 17th article, wherein, said Dr. Johnson, she mentions this matter "with as little positiveness as could be," does not assert the doctrine of absolute predestination, because, in the article just before, she states that "we may fall from grace given," which tenet would be inconsistent with the other: and indeed we may say that with such a doctrine the existence of a Liturgy, or the use of any prayer at all, would be inconsistent. And thus Hobbes denies prayer to be either a cause or a means of God's blessings, for God's will is unchangeable. But, retorts Bramhall, to "change the will," and "to will a change," are two different things; "to change the will argues a change in the agent, but to will a change only argues a change in the object." We can only say, on Bramhall's first great proposition above stated, that every

* Correspondence with Bishop Jebb, vol. i. p. 123. Letter 20.

change in our wills is known to the always *present* knowledge of God, and that such terms as "from the foundation of the world," &c., which seem to us to argue foreknowledge in God, actually only signify present knowledge with Him in whom is no past or future, but one present time; and when we think we are particularly acute and clever in making discoveries in this most abstruse theology, let us bear in mind the archbishop's caution, "Too much light is an enemy to the light, and too much law is an enemy to justice. I could wish we wrangled less about God's decrees until we understood them better." Meanwhile, let us agree with our British poet:*

> "One adequate support
> For the calamities of mortal life
> Exists—one only; an assured belief
> That the procession of our fate, howe'er
> Sad or disturb'd, is order'd by a Being
> Of infinite benevolence and power;
> *Whose everlasting purposes embrace*
> *All accidents*, converting them to good:"

for this is the resolution we must at last arrive at, in common with Parnell's "bending hermit," and confess that the Almighty,

> "Your actions uses, nor controls your will."

The celebrated works of Bramhall comprise "An Answer to M. de la Militière;" "A just Vindication of the Church of England from the unjust Aspersion of Criminal Schism;" "A Replication to the Bishop of Chalcedon: with Appendix in Answer to the Exceptions of William Sergeant;" "Schism Guarded, &c.;" "The Consecration and Succession of Protestant Bishops justified." This was among the most popular of his works, and amply refutes the idle story of the Nag's Head Consecration. "Discourses against the English Sectaries," "The Serpent Salve," "Vindication of himself and the Episcopal Clergy, &c.:" and, we may justly own, after reading these works, that whoever wishes to withstand the encroachments of Popery or Dissent should by no means

* Wordsworth's Excursion, book iv. line 11, &c.

neglect a diligent perusal of Bramhall: for, from his writings, he will indeed come forth a scholar, armed at all points for attack or defense. In his controversies with the Church of Rome, Jeremy Taylor tells us, that "he stated the questions so wisely, and conducted them so prudently, and handled them so learnedly, that I may truly say, they never were more materially confuted by any man since the questions have so unhappily disturbed Christendom."

The latest editor of his works observes, while he excuses the occasional homeliness of the language, that, "It is impossible to read a sentence of Bramhall's writings without feeling that he is in earnest." We are told that "he was a firm friend to the Church of England, bold in the defense of it, and patient in suffering for it: yet he was very far from any thing like bigotry. He had a great allowance and charity for men of different persuasions, looking upon those churches as in a tottering condition *that stood upon nice opinions.*" He thought it to be the interest of the Protestant church to widen her foundation, and make her articles as charitable and comprehensive (so saith Paley also) as she could, that those nicer accuracies, that divide the greatest wits of the world, might not be made the characteristics of reformation, and give occasion to one party to excommunicate and censure another. Thus he saw the Church of England constituted; both Calvinists and Arminians subscribing the same propositions, and "walking in the house of God as friends." O that the men of the present day who love Bramhall, were like-minded with him, and we should not witness the painful spectacle of distractions and divisions *within* the church, thus giving power to Rome, and room for the taunts and rebukes of dissenters! Thus the poet:*

> "*High* and *Low*,
> Watchwords of party, on all tongues are rife,
> As if a church, though sprung from heaven, must owe
> To opposites and fierce extremes her life.
> No! *to the golden mean, and quiet flow*
> *Of truths that soften hatred, temper strife.*"

* Wordsworth's Sonnets.

Bramhall, like most Episcopal divines of that period, endured much trial and trouble, but was at length wonderfully delivered, and during his life effected much good for the church. The eloquent Jeremy Taylor preached his funeral sermon, in the course of which he enumerates these matters in their due order. In telling his hearers that none can avoid the sentence of death, he says, "If wit and learning, great fame and great experience; if wise notices of things, and an honorable fortune; if courage and skill, if prelacy and an honorable age, if any thing that could give greatness and immunity to a wise and prudent man, could have been put in a bar against a sad day, and have gone for good plea, this sad scene of sorrows had not been the entertainment of this assembly." The bishop further observes, "He was a man of great business and great resort: *Semper aliquis in Cydonis domo*, as the Corinthians said: 'There was always somebody in Cydon's house.' He was *μερίζων τὸν βιὸν ἔργῳ καὶ βίβλῳ*, 'he divided his life into labor and his book.'" He describes him as possessing Hooker's judiciousness, Jewell's learning, the acuteness of Bishop Andrewes; and sums up by saying, "He was a wise prelate, a learned doctor, a just man, a true friend, a great benefactor to others, a thankful beneficiary where he was obliged himself." Such a character from a man so learned and just as Taylor is indeed of value; and let it be said to every man who would take part, or wish for decision and settledness, in the great controversial questions of this day, and which are more and more advancing with power and passion in proportion as Rome marches through the land and gathers strength, or as Dissent increases and is the occasion of anarchy and trouble, let it be over and over again spoken in the ears of men, "Read Bramhall; whatever else you read or hear, sit down and read the undying works of Bramhall; ay, read Hooker, read Andrewes, read Beveridge, read Taylor, but nevertheless, take good heed that you neglect not a patient and digestive reading of Bramhall! Then your information on all points of the usual controversies will be full and satisfactory."

Johnson praised John Bunyan highly. "His 'Pilgrim's Progress' has great merit, both for invention, imagination,

and the conduct of the story. Few books, I believe, have had a more extensive sale." He observes, that it is remarkable, that it begins very much like the poem of Dante, and yet no translation of Dante, had appeared when Bunyan wrote. He thought also that he must have read Spenser. "The Pilgrim's Progress," recommended in great degree by the persecution that poor Bunyan underwent (and hence the singular circumstances under which it was published), ere he was released by the kind interposition of the Bishop of Lincoln (Dr. Barlow), is still a popular book, and likely to continue so. The poorer classes of people, when they once understand it, are fond of it, but it is puzzling oftentimes to know what to answer, when they ask whether it be all true? If you say, It is not; then they would probably consider their time wasted in reading any more of it: and still, you can hardly aver that it is true, although drawing a picture of what may be true; to explain to them its allegorical nature would not be satisfactory. Bunyan's other religious parables and tracts, in the opinion of many, are deservedly consigned to oblivion.

Isaac Walton, religious, modest, quaint Isaac Walton, well might Dr. Johnson send word to Dr. Horne, that all the attention he could give, "shall be cheerfully bestowed upon what I think a pious work, the preservation and elucidation of Walton, *by whose writings I have been most pleasingly edified.*" And again, Boswell informs us, "He talked of 'Isaac Walton's Lives,' which was one of his most favorite books. Dr. Donne's Life, he said, was the most perfect of all." This is a perfect, as well as a popular book—it is the simplicity, the meekness, the truthfulness, the cheerfulness, and modesty of Walton that charms us in his character of a biographer. Of this latter quality he gives us a sample in his Preface to Dr. Donne's Life, wherein he says, "If the author's glorious spirit, which now is in heaven, can have the leisure to look down and see me, the poorest, the meanest of all his friends, in the midst of his officious (in the old sense) duty, confident I am, that he will not disdain this well-meant sacrifice to his memory," &c. Surely in this we perceive a sincere humbleness concerning himself, united with a be-

coming confidence in the departed one's integrity: for it was but the convert rightly remembering the converter, as he said,

> "Forget his powerful preaching: and forget
> I am his convert."

It is to be regretted that the republication of "Walton's Lives" was not undertaken by Bishop Horne; he was a fit man for the work.

Come we next to Baxter, a great man and a good, one of the most spiritually-minded of non-conformists, and yet not without his failings in other people's eyes, and most certainly, we may conclude, in his own. In the loving liberality of his heart, he was but half non-conformist, and half monarchist. Hence, he says, "The Quakers in their shops, when I go along London streets, say, 'Alas! poor man, thou art yet in darkness.' They have oft come to the congregation, when I had liberty to preach Christ's Gospel, and cried out against me as a deceiver of the people. They have followed me home, crying out in the streets, 'The day of the Lord is coming, and thou shalt perish as a deceiver!' They have stood in the market-place, and under my window, year after year, crying to the people, 'Take heed of your priests, they deceive your souls!' And if any one wore a lace or neat clothing, they cried out to me, 'These are the fruits of your ministry!'"

Thus was a good Christian treated by other professing Christians, putting us in mind of what happened to the pious and charitable Mede. This able and modest divine had lent money to a person at Cambridge, whom at a future time, when no longer in need, he reminded of his obligation. The answer he received was, "That, upon a strict and exact account, he had no right to what he claimed." "No right?" demanded Mede. "No, no right," rejoined the other, who was a Puritan, "because you are none of God's children: for they only have right, who are gracious in God's sight!" What would Protestants now say, should this their champion be thus taunted in the present time: he who has so learnedly, at least, brought the prophecies contained in a portion of Scripture (the Apocalypse) to bear against the Church of Rome: he, who to that common taunt of the Romanists,

"Where was your church before Luther?" readily answered, "Where was the flour when the wheat went to the mill?"

Baxter was a *via media* man of his days. He expressed an open dislike to the usurpation of Cromwell, and told the Protector to his face that the people of England held the ancient institutions of the country in love and reverence. This we may conceive to be the fact; for when the Restoration took place, Charles the Second, on being so warmly greeted by all classes of the people, said, "The only wonder to himself was, that he had not come back before." In religion Baxter endeavored to find a halting-place between strict Calvinism and high-church Arminianism, reserving the doctrine of election, but discarding that of reprobation. As he grew older he became milder in his doctrines, and it is to the abatement of his zeal against Arminianism that Bramhall pithily observes, "I see Truth is the daughter of Time." In his early writings he speaks very differently of the fear of death to what he does when old age crept upon him—naturam expellas furcâ tamen *usque recurret*. Some political allusions, too, of a most exceptionable character, which appeared in three editions of his "Saints' Rest," were subsequently expunged.

Though a non-conformist, he was accounted, in his own way, to be a friend to the Established Church, and he strongly took the part of the church in supporting the constitution, when the bishops refused to sanction the reading of the Second Declaration of Indulgence, issued by James the Second, on the 27th of April, 1688. Every one must see that James's professions of liberalism were the masks under which he hoped to bring in the Popish religion, and Baxter would most quickly perceive this, since, in preaching before Cromwell, he appears to think the toleration of sectaries and separatists the grand evil of his government. In short, he was always trying to repress the sectaries, and to uphold an Episcopacy, as he expressed it, "desirable for reformation, and peace of Churches;" and he did so because "it being agreeable to the Scripture and primitive government, is likeliest to be the way of a more universal concord, if ever the churches on earth arrive to such a blessing; however, *it will*

*be most acceptable to God, and well-informed consciences.*" But he met with the usual fate of a reconciler. "And thus," says Macaulay, "zealous churchmen called him a Roundhead; and many non-conformists accused him of Erastianism and Arminianism;" he himself, in his "Grotian Religion," branding Grotius as a Papist in disguise. He also felt aware of the wrong nature of his earlier impetuosity, and hence supposed that the prohibition on David was laid upon himself also; for he says, "I have been, in the heat of my zeal, so forward to change, and *ways of blood*, that I fear God will not let me have a hand in the peaceable building of his church, nor to see it; for I have always been taken off when I attempted it." Those who wish to read the trial of Baxter, when arraigned before the furious and bloody-minded Jeffreys, must turn to the pages of Macaulay's magnificent History of England.

Like that of Bunyan, the name of Baxter will ever be a cherished one in England. His "Call to the Unconverted," and "Saints' Rest," are books universally known, and almost as universally admired. The man is to be pitied who loves them not. Boswell asked Johnson what works of Richard Baxter's he should read? and the reply was characteristic of the religious mind within him, "Read any of them; they are all good." At another time he said, "Baxter's 'Reasons of the Christian Religion' contain the best collection of the evidences of the divinity of the Christian system." Addison's "Evidences of the Christian Religion," however, must never be forgotten.

Baxter lived in troubled and fanatical times, when it might be said of the high and turbulent of both sides, that sometimes they trod on the head of a saint, and sometimes spat in the face of an angel; for virulent factions have little discrimination, little esteem for the virtues of opponents. When Besme, the wretch who assassinated Admiral de Coligny in cool blood, was taken by M. de Berthauville, he said, "I was always, you know," discharging a pistol at him, "a wicked dog!" "But I," said Berthauville, sheathing his sword in the murderer's body, "am determined that you shall be wicked no longer." Well would it be if we could turn

this sword against our own selves, for, in reality, there is a species of murder going on between religious sects, when men are instigated to *say* all the malicious words they can imagine, and would *act*, as in former days, if the humane common law of the land, combined with a more charitable spirit of public opinion, did not restrain them.

Dr. Johnson did not speak well of Burnet; he was not a man after his own heart. He thought the "History of his own Times" very entertaining, though the style "mere chit-chat." He did not think he intentionally lied, but was so much prejudiced, that he took no pains to find out the truth. "He was like a man," he said, "who resolves to regulate his own time by a certain watch, but will not inquire whether the watch is right or not." If we substitute the words "church" or "sect" for watch, we shall find very many individuals of this description, who follow after a name or a party without due and candid investigation. On another occasion he said of this book, "The first part of it is one of the most entertaining books in the English language: it is quite dramatic: while he went about every where, saw every where, and heard every where." By the first part he meant, so far as it appears that Burnet himself was actually engaged in what he has told, which might easily be distinguished.

Bishop Burnet's great and enduring works may be said to be his History of the Reformation, his Exposition of the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England, and his Pastoral Care, from the pages of which quotations have been already given. In his preface to the Exposition he modestly says: "I had no other design in this work, but first to find out the truth myself, and then to help others to find it out. If I succeed to any degree in this design, I will bless God for it; and if I fail in it, I will bear it with the humility and patience that becomes me. But as soon as I see a better work of this kind, I shall be among the first of those who shall recommend that, and disparage this." And now, one hundred and fifty years after this was written, the book is more commended than ever. Archbishop Tillotson has been blamed, because, as archbishop, he thus expressed himself to Burnet in praise of one portion of the Exposition: "In the

article of the Trinity," he wrote, "you have said all that I think can be said upon so obscure and difficult an argument;" adding, "the Socinians have just now published an answer to us all." But the fact is, that Burnet was a man of remarkable sense and prudence, so that he wrote in defense of the Trinity, just as Bishop Hoadley wrote in defense of Episcopacy: both of these divines amply proved their several cases, without entering upon the higher parts of the argument: indeed Burnet would never run into extremes, but always sought to lay down such proof and persuasion as might prevail with wise and good men. He loved a broad foundation, and hence of the articles he says, where they "are conceived in large and general words, and have not more special and restrained words in them, we ought to take that for a sure indication that the church does not intend to tie men up too severely to particular opinions, but that she leaves all to such a liberty as is agreeable with the purity of the faith." Burnet was neither high church and eloquent as Atterbury, nor so spiritual as Baxter, but a man of enlarged and liberal views, endued with great variety of learning; indeed very few books escaped his research, of all that had been printed from the time that printing presses were first set up in England to the end of Queen Elizabeth's reign. He thought two of the best books which we have, were "Laud's Conference with Fisher the Jesuit," and Chillingworth's "Religion of Protestants," &c., the former famous for its great learning, judgment, and exactness; the latter written with so clear a thread of reason, and in so lively a style, that it was justly reckoned, with the above, to be the best book that had been written in our language.

Burnet set out in life with higher church opinions than he afterward held; in short, he is a rare instance of a man becoming more liberal, and, as he was accounted, latitudinarian, as he grew older and more acquainted with the world of men. For this, like Tillotson, he suffered persecution, but now his works are well esteemed by the whole church. He rightly acted the important office of a bishop. "I venerate the memory of this good prelate," says Lady Huntingdon,* a non-

* Her Memoirs, vol. i. p. 40.

conformist, "and I love those who have descended from him, praying that the like faith which was in him may be in them also:" and from his daughter, an excellent woman, her ladyship learnt, that "the bishop, from the zealous care of his diocese, made it a rule yearly to visit the various parishes of which it was composed; and treated with the most distinguished regard such ministers as were eminent for their piety, and most attentive in their care of the souls of the people." It is a good sentence that he wrote: "A greater disparagement to the Christian religion can not be imagined, than to propose the hopes of God's mercy and pardon *barely upon believing, without a life suitable to the rules it gives us.*"* Of course, when the Church of England states that we are justified by faith only, she means a fruitful faith, a faith which worketh by love; so that we are really justified, not by mere belief only, and not by works alone, but by faith and works united; and if we believe not till we come to our death-beds, and, like the thief on the cross, can perform no good works, if we believe God, it must be left to Him to account it as righteousness or not, even as it seemeth fit to His good pleasure; albeit nearly up to the last moments of life some evidences of a real faith may be afforded through works, the work of patience, it may be, to our souls. Again, in alluding to "forgive us our trespasses," and "give us this day our daily bread," being standing petitions, he says, "We sin daily, and do always need a pardon. Upon these reasons we conclude, *that somewhat of the man enters into all that men do.*" But this sentence, from the conclusion of the History of his own Times, should be engraven on the mind of every minister of the Church of England. "Maintaining arguments for more power than we have, will have no effect, unless the world see that we make a good use of the authority already in our hands. It is with the clergy as with princes: the only way to keep the prerogative from being uneasy to their subjects, and being disputed, *is to manage it wholly for their good and advantage.* Then all will be for it, when they find it is for them. *Let the clergy live and labor well, and they will feel as much authority will follow as*

* Exposition of Article XII.

*they will know how to manage well. They will never be secured or recovered from contempt, but by living and laboring as they ought.*" What sound advice is this to princes and pastors! Had it been followed, the history of the kings of England would not be such as it is; Charles the First had not been executed; neither would the spirit of revolution have been aroused throughout foreign nations in the year 1848. Our own blessed queen has manifestly been trained to observe this principle as propounded by the bishop. But to clergymen it is of most essential service: he who cares for others will be cared for himself. In rebuke, as well as in guidance, the respect and love of the people is of paramount importance. Let a touching anecdote illustrate this:* A clergyman, of a remarkable spirit of love, sharply rebuked, in the presence of a clerical friend, a parishioner for gross misconduct. The severity of the reproof astonished his friend, who could not help declaring, that in his own case, with one of his people, he should have expected an irreconcilable breach. The answer was the result of Christian wisdom and experience: "Oh, my friend, when there is love in the heart, you may say any thing!" No man more than Dr. Johnson himself, as we have seen, respected a laborious clergyman, and reprobated a careless one. The man that attended on the death-bed of Rochester; that wrote a letter of just censure to his king, and accompanied Russell to the scaffold; who was a good pastor and good bishop, could he but have known him, would, we may conjecture, have obtained Dr. Johnson's regard. He could not like his politics, but he would have approved of many of his writings. Take this true sentence: "It is the glory of the church, that in her disputes on both hands, as well with those of the Church of Rome as with those that separate from her, she has both the doctrine and the constitution of the primitive church on her side."†

Dr. Doddridge was mentioned by Johnson as being the author of one of the finest epigrams in the English language.

* It is told in Bridge's "Christian Ministry," p. 654.

† "Pastoral Care," in Clergyman's Instructor, ch. iv. p. 139, 4th ed.

It consists of a sacred rendering of his family motto, *Dum vivimus vivamus.* But this was praise given to a very small thing, when we consider the greatness and excellency of his works, especially his "Family Expositor," and "The Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul." Although he would place baptismal regeneration in the shade, for he evidently confounds regeneration with conversion, yet one sentence or two gives a loophole through which all the maintainers of baptismal regeneration may find a way of escape from his general view of regeneration. He was not averse to forms of prayer, and such forms he wrote. The learned Bishop Warburton was one of his correspondents. Croker mentions that some of his letters have been recently published, with no great advantage to his fame. Strange, that in his funeral sermon on the enthusiast, Colonel Gardiner, he should have deliberately declared, that "it was hard for him to say where, but in the book of God, the Colonel *found his example*, or where he had *left his equal!*" Doddridge was always warm-hearted, and such thoroughly kind and devoted men are apt to go too far. He died a serene death, and felt no concern for his departure, beyond the grief it would occasion his wife; but even in allusion to this, he said, "I can cheerfully leave my dear Mrs. Doddridge a widow in a strange land (at Lisbon), if such be the appointment of our heavenly Father." Thus this true saint would have have pleased an apostle, for he was not "without natural affection."

Of Bishop Warburton's abilities Dr Johnson thought most highly. Perhaps his strong sense of gratitude prejudiced him in some degree toward the liking of this learned man. "He praised me at a time," he said, "when praise was of value to me." This was spoken in relation to encomiastic remarks of Warburton on some criticisms on Macbeth, put forth by Dr. Johnson. Sir John Hawkins tells us, that Johnson being asked, "Whether he had ever been in company with Dr. Warburton," answered, "I never saw him till one evening, about a week ago, at the Bishop of St. Asaph's: at first he looked surlily at me; but after we had jostled into conversation he took me to a window, asked me some questions, and before we parted was so well pleased with me that he patted

me." "You, always, sir, preserved a great respect for him?" "Yes, and justly: when as yet I was in no favor with the world, he spoke well of me, and I hope I never forgot the obligation." The bishop was greatly pleased with Johnson's high-spirited letter to Lord Chesterfield, in which he rejected that nobleman's condescensions in a manner worthy a noble son of literature; for such language was in accordance with the bishop's own meekness of mind; and then Warburton sent a message of congratulation to our leviathan. Dr. Johnson was visibly pleased, because a word of praise from such a man was of great account in his estimation. At a time when Edwards's Canons on Criticism appeared, and his eulogizers would have exalted him to a par with Warburton, "Nay," said Johnson, "there is no proportion between the two men; they must not be named together. A fly, sir, may sting a stately horse" (Edwards had sharply criticised Warburton), "and make him wince; but one is but an insect, and the other is a horse still."

When George the Third observed to Johnson, that he supposed he must have read a great deal, he said, in his reply, that he had not read much, compared with Dr. Warburton. And then the king said, that he had heard Dr. Warburton was a man of such general knowledge, that you could scarce talk with him on any subject on which he was not qualified to speak; and that his learning resembled Garrick's acting in its universality. The conversation thence turning on the controversy between Warburton and Lowth, Johnson remarked, "Warburton has most general, most scholastic learning; Lowth is the more correct scholar."

Warburton wrote to Bishop Hurd in an unfriendly way of Johnson, in regard to certain criticisms; and Johnson, we know, as Dr. Parr says, "was of literary merit a sagacious, but a most severe judge;" yet we have no reason to think that these great men did not admire each other's talents: in short, Warburton said of Johnson, "I admire him, but I can not bear his style;" and Johnson being told of this, said, "That is exactly my case as to him." And yet, Boswell informs us, the manner in which he expressed his admiration of the fertility of Warburton's genius, and of the variety of

his materials, was, "The table is always full, sir. He brings things from the north and the south, and from every quarter. In his 'Divine Legation' you are always entertained. He carries you round and round, without carrying you forward to the point; but then, you have no wish to be carried forward." And he said to the Rev. Mr. Strahan, "Warburton is, perhaps, the last man who has written with a mind full of reading and reflection."

In the Life of Pope, Johnson writes of Warburton's wonderful abilities, and the haughty confidence which these abilities gave him: for, in truth, he was, as Gibbon styled him, "the dictator and tyrant of the world of literature." At the time that he wrote his famous remarks on behalf of Pope's "Essay on Man," refuting the idea that it favored fatalism, Pope himself wrote to him, and said in his letter, "You have made my system as clear as I ought to have done, and could not. It is, indeed, the same system as mine, but illustrated with a ray of your own, as they say our natural body is the same still when it is glorified." Pope afterward lived in the greatest intimacy with him; and Warburton was made a bishop solely from the vastness of his literary and theological talents. Bishop Newton, in quoting from Warburton's "Divine Legation,"* speaks of him as one "who improves every subject that he handles."

Warburton had many opponents, for he attacked many men of eminence. Neither could he at all like the ideas and feelings of the enthusiastic followers of religion. The biographer of Lady Huntingdon speaks roughly of him, as he does too of many others undeservedly; he says,† "*with his characteristic rudeness*, he pronounced her an incurable enthusiast: for with him all personal experience of a divine witness by the Spirit of God in the heart, was rank enthusiasm." And yet, Warburton writes, "In the promulgation of a new religion, besides those marks of truth arising from the reasonableness and purity of the doctrine, which show it worthy of God, to prove it actually came from Him there is need of certain miraculous gifts, which the Holy Spirit im-

* Dissert. on the Prophecies, vol. i. p. 85.
† Vol. i. p. 443.

parts to those with whom he then condescends to dwell. *But the peculiar office of the Holy Spirit is the sanctification of the heart.*"* True we may find, in the perversity of man, new matter of glory to God. "And we bless the hand," he says, "which turned the avarice of a furious friar (Luther), and the luxury of a debauched monarch (Henry VIII), from their natural mischiefs, to become instruments of the choicest blessings—the recovery of letters, and the restoration of religion."

And yet, when we see what enthusiasm has achieved in the civil world, we may well be tempted to seek its warm help in the promotion of a religion which is militant here on earth. An eminent writer of Essays, after expressing his wish that enthusiasm may be expelled from its religious dominions, but maintained in its civil possessions, looking upon it, in all other points but that of religion, to be a very necessary turn of mind, says: "To strike this spirit out of the human constitution, to reduce things to their precise philosophical standard, would be to check some of the main wheels of society, and to fix half the world in an useless apathy."† True, but still really great hearts and minds are not enthusiastic. Nelson had a great heart, not an enthusiastic one: Wellington and Napoleon were never enthusiasts, although so many around them might be made so by them: Wesley's *disposition* was not enthusiastic: these men were possessed of a more enduring principle than enthusiasm could have engendered. Warburton liked warmth and pathos, and decides, in the case of preaching, that "a pathetic address to the *passions and affections* of penitent hearers, is perhaps the most operative of all the various species of instruction." What can exceed the extreme pathos of our Lord's language? what surpass the affection of His actions? and yet, there is nothing of the enthusiast displayed in the whole course of His marvelous career. In the Church of Rome, we may say, that feelings of enthusiasm are carried to their highest pitch, and extremes nowhere more completely meet than in the extemporaneous addresses of the mendicant friar, and the illiterate ranter. Warmth of heart, guided by intelligence and

* Matt. xxiii. 2, 3. † Melmoth.

right sense, is always to be desired in the religious life; indeed there is little earnestness of thought and purpose without it.

There will always be different opinions entertained in regard to the excellences, intellectual or moral, of great men. Johnson's praise of Warburton, a portion only of which is given, is exceeded by that of Bishop Newton. "He was, indeed, a great genius," says the bishop, "of the most extensive reading, of the most retentive memory, of the most copious invention, of the liveliest imagination, of the sharpest discernment, of the quickest wit, and of the readiest and happiest application of his immense knowledge to the present subject and occasion." In private life "he was excellent and admirable, both as a companion and a friend;" in the latter character, he "laid open his very heart; and the attribute which he was pleased to give to Mr. Pope, of being *the soul of friendship*, was more justly applicable to him, and more properly his own! His works are described as a κτῆμα ἐς ἀεὶ, "a possession for ever." Bishop Newton proceeds to draw a comparison, or rather a contrast, between Warburton and Dr. Jortin, much to the advantage of the former, but saying of each of these extraordinary men, "Their superior excellences will live in the mouths and memories of men."

So conspicuously eminent was Warburton's talent, that on his publishing a dissertation on the origin of Books of Chivalry, &c. which Pope tells him he had not got over two paragraphs of, before he cried out, *Aut Erasmus, aut Diabolus;* "I knew you,"* he adds, "as certainly as the ancients did the gods, by the first pace, and the very gait. I have not a moment to express myself in, but could not omit this which delighted me so much."

After reading these (and still greater encomiums which might be adduced from the learned Bishop Hurd's Life of Warburton), we turn to the remarks of the Rev. William Jones of Nayland, and obtain another view of this renowned theologian. This acute and sterling writer describes Warburton's books as such that "have a great flash of learning, but

* Letter 113 to Mr. Warburton, in Pope's Works.

with little solidity and less piety. To the purity of Christian literature they have certainly done, and are still doing, much hurt." Harder things are said of Warburton, which need not be related, except that Bishop Newton and Mr. Jones differ in their prophetical discernment, for the latter thinks the Christian world will not derive any great harm, "because it is apprehended, the reading of Bishop Warburton's books will hereafter be much less than it hath been." It is somewhat remarkable that this animadversion proceeds from a high church source, while the praises of Bishop Newton may be said to emanate from an opposite quarter. It must be borne in mind, that Mr. Jones could not relish the criticisms of Bishop Warburton, on the theological principles of John Hutchinson, Esq., the famous Mosaic philosopher, the friends of whom dreaded the ill effects of the doctor's criticisms "from the boldness of the man, and the popularity of his books."*

Dr. Johnson liked Bishop Hurd, a friend of Warburton's, but of rather a Whiggish cast in politics. This appears in his celebrated "Moral and Political Dialogues," although much modified in a subsequent edition. When his lordship declined the honor of becoming Archbishop of Canterbury, Johnson said, "I am glad he did not go to Lambeth: for after all, I fear he is a Whig in his heart." We need not in this place descant on Johnson opinion of Whigs and Tories. However, after having at one time stated that Hurd was one of those men who account for every thing systematically (*too* systematically, he meant), he said, at another, "Hurd, sir, is a man whose acquaintance is a valuable acquisition."

Both in Hannah More's and Lady Huntingdon's Memoirs, Bishop Hurd is mentioned with approbation.† In speaking of the strong sentiments of piety that imbued the mind of George the Third, yet reprobating the conduct of those about him, who, in their zeal to amuse him sought to weaken his

* See life of Bishop Horne, by Rev. W. Jones, M.A. of Nayland; in the sixth volume of Jones of Nayland's Works, p. 47, 48. Mr. Hutchinson was an opponent of Dr. Woodward on natural history, and Sir Isaac Newton in philosophy.

† Memoirs of Hannah More, vol. iii. p. 240.

religious habits, and draw him off from his wonted strict observance of the Lord's day, Hannah More says, "I wish any one had the honest courage to tell him a little circumstance respecting a prelate, whom he has always loved and honored above the whole bench, the Bishop of Worcester. The king had last summer intended a visit to his venerable aged friend, and a letter was sent to fix the day of his coming to him. The bishop happened to receive this letter on a Sunday, and no entreaties of his family could prevail on him to open it until the next day, lest the knowledge that the king was on the point of coming should agitate his spirits, and indispose him for the duties of the day."

In the Memoirs of the Countess of Huntingdon,* we are told that the venerable Dr. Hurd, Bishop of Worcester, being in the habit of preaching frequently, had observed a poor man remarkably attentive, and made him some little present. After a while, he missed his humble auditor, and meeting him, said, "John, how is it that I do not see you in the aisle as usual?" John, with some hesitation, replied, "My Lord, I hope you will not be offended, and I will tell you the truth. I went the other day to hear the Methodists, and I understand their plain words so much better, that I have attended them ever since." The bishop put his hand into his pocket, and gave him a guinea, with words to this effect: "God bless you, and go where you can receive the greatest profit to your soul." This will commonly be accounted noble of the bishop, and yet, we may suppose that he gave not the poor man a guinea because he went to hear the Methodists, but because he saw in him (apart from their scheme of division), a true simplicity of faith, and sincerity of character. And it showed also that the bishop knew what was in man—in poor uninstructed man; for very many of the humbler classes know nothing of the reasons and arguments in favor of the superior claims of the church, and go to hear other preachers without the slightest hostility to the church, simply because they think *it all very good that they hear*, so that it be something of the Gospel. Indeed, in many cases, they themselves have been the very first to acquaint their clergyman of the fact of

* Vol. i. p. 18.

such attendance, thinking the announcement sure of gaining his cordial approbation; neither in many instances, wherein the willfully schismatic or presumptive spirit has been wanting, but all is humbleness and candor, have they been disappointed.

Dr. Johnson, who loved the virtue of gentleness in others, and thought it the first of recommendations of a man's character, would have liked to have listened to Bishop Hurd's description of true, in contradistinction to artificial politeness, as being "modest, unpretending, generous. *It appears as little as may be*, and when it does a courtesy, would willingly conceal it. It chooses silently to forego its own claims, not officiously to withdraw them. It engages a man to prefer his neighbor to himself; because he really esteems him; because he is tender of his reputation; because he thinks it more manly, more Christian, to descend a little himself, than to degrade another."

Bishops Watson and Horne he admired. The "Chemical Essays" of the former met with his approval more than the political and ecclesiastical opinions advanced by his lordship. Never did there breathe a more zealous supporter of civil and religious liberty; and how many of his ecclesiastical reforms have passed, and are passing, into law! Still have the difficulties intermingled with private patronage, and the boundaries of parishes, to be overcome; and hence a wish of the bishop (the better ministration of the offices of the church in districts which should be less extensive) to be fulfilled, which, as much as any other, is engaging the attention of church reformers in this day. "Without wishing," he said, "to see all preferments of the same value, I shall never cease to wish, that no living in the kingdom may be so small, as to render it necessary for any man to have two." It has been insinuated, that because this bishop held the poorest see, therefore he was so ardent in bringing about an equality, or nearly so, of the episcopal revenues. But no, this was a weak invention of the enemy: yea, "an enemy hath done this," he might have exclaimed in Scriptural language; for it was the evils attendant on the *translation* of bishops that he endeavored to destroy, and both in church and in the

state, his constant advice was to remove such rotten parts of the glorious fabric of civil and religious freedom, as daily invite the attacks of its enemies; and by timely reformation to preserve the mighty edifice, the work of ages, and the envy of the world, from being irretrievably injured by the rude hand of popular discontent, of fanatical zeal, or republican violence!

Of that accomplished and elegant divine, Bishop Horne, so truthful withal, and sincere, it is almost unnecessary to speak, so many must be acquainted intimately with his discourses, and all with his memoirs, as written admirably by his friend and companion, Jones of Nayland. In regarding the primitive orthodoxy, piety, poverty, and depressed state of the Episcopalian Church in Scotland, he thought, that, "if the great apostle of the Gentiles were upon earth, and it were put to his choice with what denomination of Christians he would communicate, the preference would probably be given to the Episcopalians of Scotland, *as most like to the people he had been used to.*"*

There is a curious anecdote of very modern date, told in reference to the poverty of the Episcopal Church in Scotland. On one occasion, when a nobleman's family were leaving that country for England, and arrangements were being made for the servants of his lordship's establishment to follow in a few days, they begged permission to stay one day longer, because it was fixed for a Confirmation. The day arrived; the servants were arrayed in their best attire, hoping to witness all the company, and the presence of the bishop, as seen at an English Confirmation; time passed on, a few young people, decent but shoeless enough, began to assemble: now and then a peasant and farmer arrived, but not yet the bishop. Of every fresh comer a servant asked, "Where is the bishop?" To a little individual in a rusty coat, and mounted on a rough shelty, the question was eagerly put, "When will the bishop arrive?" "In truth," answers the rider, but in broad Scotch dialect, "I am all the bishop you'll see to-day." And his *lordship* smilingly trotted on, to the utter amazement of the pampered menials of the nobleman.

* Jones of Nayland's Works, vol. vi. p. 141.

Bishop Horne died as he had lived. Hannah More writes of her sister's last call, when he was actually dying, and had just received the sacrament with his family, with extraordinary devotion; and says, "Every text he repeated, every word he uttered, consisted of praise, and the most devout thankfulness. He took leave of all separately, exhorted and blessed them." His man told her, that about two o'clock he calmly pronounced the words, "Blessed Jesus!" stretched himself out, and expired with the utmost tranquillity. Such was the end of "the wise, the witty, the pleasant, the good Bishop of Norwich:" equaled certainly in the happiness and serenity of his final departure by the eminent Bishop of London, Dr. Porteus.

Jones of Nayland* relates a circumstance which can not fail to put us in mind of the extraordinary dream of Lord Lyttelton, to whom the exact minute of his death was foretold. On the Friday before the bishop's death, while his housekeeper was in waiting by his bedside, he asked her on what day of the week the *seventeenth* day of the month would fall? She answered, on Tuesday. "Make a note of that," said he, "in a book," which, to satisfy him, she pretended to do. This proved to be *the day on which he died*, as quietly as he had lived. From this occurrence a rumor got abroad, as if he had received some forewarning of the time of his death. Jones of Nayland, a learned and sagacious man, observes, "To this I can *say* nothing; but I can *think* without any danger of being mistaken, that if ever there was a man in these latter days, who was worthy to receive from above any unusual testimony due to superior piety, *he was that man.*" Bishop Horne died about twelve years after the decease of Dr. Johnson, or this incident would probably have arrested his attention, and called forth a remark stamped with the peculiar reflections of his own mind on supernatural intimations.

We may be right sure that Dr. Johnson never could bear the writings of Dr. Priestley, except such as had relation to science only. It appears that chemistry was always an interesting study with Dr. Johnson. While he was in Wilt-

* In his Works, vol. vi. p. 159.

shire he attended some experiments made by a physician, and frequent mention being made of Dr. Priestley, he knit his brows, and in a stern manner inquired, "Why do we hear so much of Dr. Priestley?" He was very properly answered, "Sir, because we are indebted to him for these important discoveries." On this Dr. Johnson appeared well content, and replied, "Well, well, I believe we are; and let every man have the honor he has merited." So strong were his feelings against any one whom he thought to be advocating pernicious principles, that he could hardly endure his society, and on some occasions would leave the room; yet he did meet Dr. Priestley at dinner without rudeness. Johnson and Wilkes also met together with much cordiality, although the former must have abhorred the politics of the latter. Priestley's rule, as a necessitarian, was to hate no man; for he believed that every man was by necessity just what he was, and could behave toward himself, or any other man, in no other way than he did; regarding therefore the hatred of man toward man as a matter ordered by the Almighty, and such as, seeing it could not be avoided, neither should it be condemned. From such a doctrine Warburton rescued Pope, although the latter was not really a necessitarian; but Priestley, both as a Calvinist and a decided Socinian, always adhered to this idea of philosophical necessity. The burning of his house and library at Birmingham is well known, a cowardly act, and one akin to what might have been St. Paul's fate, when, in order to destroy the doctrines, they would destroy the man. Dr. Priestley may have thought that necessity impelled, and hence gave a right to a mob of men to act thus; but it is a certain truth, and one always acted upon by the law of man, which proceeds from the law of God, that NO MAN HAS A RIGHT TO DO WRONG.

Of Dr. Priestley's theological works, Dr. Johnson remarked, "that they tended to unsettle every thing and yet settled nothing." In truth, they only settled this thing, namely, that if Socinianism were universally embraced, a millennium of happiness would follow; no more superstitious respect for kings and priests; no more dispute in polemics; no more

war on any scale at all: such, at least, is his view in his celebrated letter to Edmund Burke. Jones of Nayland has given to the world "A small Whole-length of Dr. Priestley," in which he criticises with calmness and reason his style, his politics, his feelings, logic, religion, and philosophy: and from passages in this estimable clergyman's Life of Bishop Horne, we find that both himself and the bishop thought poorly of the talents of the dissenting doctor, and certainly disliked all his principles. He was possessed of great cleverness and sagacity in philosophical experiments, but was not a man of profound learning; yet "his vanity made him believe that he was wise enough to enlighten, and powerful enough to disturb the world."* Dr. Johnson is said to have spoken his opinion of the doctor, to Mr. Badcock in these words: "You have proved him as deficient in probity as he is in learning;" and he seems further to have signified,† that Priestley had borrowed from those who had been borrowers themselves, and did not know that the mistakes he adopted had been rectified by others. He seems to have been endued with much urbanity and gentleness of disposition, and to have been one, who, in the midst of stirring controversies, felt little or no hostility to opponents, but rather converted them, while they retained their antipathies to his opinions, into personal friends. This is one of the best traits in any man's character, and will have its meed.

The Rev. Dr. Parnell, like other of our poets, Collins and Gray, has written little, but that little has been long and admiringly preserved. Johnson's memoir of him is short, because Goldsmith had undertaken the task before, so he contents himself with paying great compliments to the biographer: "His criticism," though he does partially differ from it in this case, he says, "it is seldom safe to contradict." His poem, "The Hermit," finds a place in nearly all collections of poetry, while his smaller pieces, some of which are elegantly composed, are less known. This

* Jones's Life of Horne, p. 133.
† Gentleman's Magazine, July, 1785.

stanza gives a true idea of youthful freedom from care and sorrow:

> "Ask gliding waters, if a tear
> Of mine increased their stream?
> Or ask the flying gales, if e'er
> I lent one sigh to them?"

And do we not conceive the fairies at work with their wonted mystery:

> "Withouten hands the dishes fly,
> The glasses with a wish come nigh,
> And with a wish retire."

He is said to have been a bad prose writer, and yet his Visions found a place in the Spectator and Guardian, in the pages of which periodicals many must have read them, especially No. 460* in the former, without knowing who might be the author. He seems to have been a man whose exertions were inflamed by hopes of preferment, and with changes in high places he changed, quitting the party of Addison, Congreve, and Steele, for that of Swift, Pope, Gay, and Arbuthnot. Pope, in his dedication of Parnell's poems to the Earl of Oxford, pictures the deceased poet as one, in contrariety to his sublunary existence,

> "Who careless, now, of interest, fame, or fate,
> Perhaps forgets that Oxford e'er was great:
> Or deeming meanest what we greatest call,
> Beholds thee glorious only in thy fall."

It is a pity that, after having expressed this fine sentiment on the nothingness of our earthly cares and views, Pope should proceed in a strain of fulsome eulogy of the earl, although it was during his lordship's descent from the height of political power.†

* Vanity, the Paradise of Fools; a Vision of her and her Attendants.

† Pope also idolized Bolingbroke. He used to speak of him as a being of superior order, that had condescended to visit this lower world: in particular, when the last comet appeared and approached near the earth, he told some of his acquaintance, "it was sent only to convey Lord Bolingbroke *home again:* just as a stage coach stops at your door to take up a passenger."—*Warburton's Essay on Pope.*

The poet was something of a man-worshiper, for he quite idolized Warburton, showing him exceeding deference.

How affectingly must the later thoughts of our poet Campbell occur to us in this place, and his deadness to the vanity of posthumous fame, although the desire of such fame may be entirely virtuous. "When I think," he said to some friends, "of the existence which shall commence when the stone is laid above my head, how can literary fame appear to me—to any one—*but as nothing?*" And he added, with the consciousness of a Johnson or an Addison, "It is an inexpressible comfort at my time of life, to be able to look back and feel that *I have not written one line against religion or virtue!*"*

Poor Parnell became intemperate in his latter years, and Johnson, with his usual charity in stating excuse, where excuse could be offered, says, "I have heard it imputed to a cause more likely to obtain forgiveness from mankind—the untimely death of a darling son: or, as others tell, the loss of his wife, who died in the midst of his expectations."

Of Dr. Young, the author of the ever popular "Night Thoughts," Dr. Johnson entertained a high opinion. And of this poem, written and obtaining a high place in an Augustan age of British writers, a poem which Boswell esteemed as a mass of the grandest and richest poetry that human genius has ever produced, and the very best book for seasoning the mind of young persons with thoughts of *vital religion*, Johnson remarks, "The power is in the whole: and in the whole there is a magnificence like that ascribed to Chinese plantation, the magnificence of vast extent and endless diversity." He thought also "The Universal Passion" to be truly a great performance. Addison, too, has written† highly of his poem on the Last Day, as a poem manifesting so many noble flights, and those apparently proceeding from a well-disposed heart, that the author can not be too much esteemed or encouraged.

Whether he was of a cheerful or pensive turn of mind seems to have become a matter of controversy. Perhaps he

* Life and Letters of Thomas Campbell, edited by William Beattie, M.D.

† The Englishman, No. 11, p. 53.

was both: probably one or the other in greater proportion at different periods of his life, and like Parnell, he never was cheerful after his wife's death. Dr. Johnson blamed him for this, and yet his own grief on the loss of the wedded partner of his life had continued for a long while, and perhaps it was never entirely erased from his mind.

On one occasion, when traveling, Boswell obtained an invitation from the son of Young,* who still resided at Welwyn, for Dr. Johnson to drink tea and pass the evening. He addressed his host, with a polite bow, thus, "Sir, I had a curiosity to come and see this place. I had the honor to know that great man your father." They walked in the garden, observing a row of trees planted by Dr. Young, and sat in the summer-house, on the outside walls of which were the inscriptions, "Ambulantes in horto audiebant vocem Dei," and, in reference to a brook by which it is situated, the lines of Horace,

> "Vivendi recte qui prorogat horam,
> Rusticus expectat dum defluat amnis: at ille
> Labitur, et labetur in omne volubilis ævum."

Once when walking in this garden with Mr. Langton, Young remarked cheerfully enough of a pensive act, "Here I had put a handsome sun-dial, with this incription, 'Eheu fugaces!'

* Dr. Young suffered severely in his last illness. It is pleasing to know that he forgave his son. His spirits were so low, and his nerves so weak, that he was compelled to decline an interview with him; but he said, "*I heartily forgive him;*" and upon mention of this, he gently lifted up his hand, and, as gently letting it fall, pronounced these words, "God bless him." This information was derived from his curate (Mr. Jones) at Welwyn.

When the Rev. Dr. Webster (grandson to Bishop Sparrow) forwarded to Young his book "On Prayer and on the Sacrament," which was dedicated to the admirable Archbishop Herring, its author received this note, not unworthy of preservation. It is from the *Life of Bowyer*, p. 541:

"Dear Sir—I have read over your Discourses with appetite, and I find in them much piety, perspicuity, eloquence, and usefulness. God grant them all the success they deserve, you wish, and the world wants. Most assuredly, *devotion is the balm of life; and no man can go unwounded to the grave.* I am, yours affectionately,

"Edward Young."

which (speaking with a smile) was sadly verified, for by the next morning my dial had been carried off."

In the Lives of the Poets Dr. Johnson has given a Memoir of Young by the Rev. Herbert Croft (at that time a barrister at law), a friend of the poet's son. From this we find that he was not rewarded with such preferment as might be considered to be due to his excellent labors until very late in life, but then he was a politician, "the lion of his master Milton;"* he was a poet, and lived retired from the world: and rarely do great men, such as the world designates patrons, go about carefully in search of merit, but rather choose to promote whatever is usefully and more ostentatiously presented before them in their public path: and besides, retired men know not what influences are at work for or against their promotion; as has been observed in this especial instance, "the parties themselves know not often, at the instant, why they are neglected, or why they are preferred." He was certainly a man of great merit, and unblamable moral conduct: his worthiness is acknowledged in a letter from Archbishop Secker. In his extreme old age, the admired poet could only recollect the names of two *friends*, his housekeeper and his hatter, to mention in his will; "but at eighty-four," observes his biographer, "where," as he adds in the Centaur, "is that world into which we were born?" If we mean to have friends, we must continually renew them; for the old ones will die off or become cool: and yet both the cherished remembrance of some old friends, and the falling away of others, prevent our hearts, in much degree, from becoming again attached to new ones. How true are the remarks of Cicero,† on the bereavement and consequent loneliness, that may attend on old age, when we have neglected to repair the loss of old friends, by new acquisitions! but still, to the Christian mind there must ever be delight in looking forward to the approaching time when we shall happily be reunited to our old friends, and feel our souls to be entirely pervaded with one calm, undying sensation of love to God, and friendship to all the souls of just men made

* See his Life in "Lives of the Poets."

† Essay on Friendship, p. 306.

perfect in heaven. On this thought a man may well live alone during the few last years of his life, and yet rejoice in his loneliness.

Dr. Johnson showed much friendship to the blind poet and divine, Rev. Thomas Blacklock, D.D., a man of extraordinary poetical talent, and of the purest and kindest character. He had been blind from the age of six years. When Johnson met with him in Scotland, he exclaimed in a tender manner, "Dear Dr. Blacklock, I am glad to see you." Alas! Dr. Blacklock could not in return look upon his good friend, but he could *hear* him: and by the faculty of hearing he had gained all his wonderful acquirements. A conversation ensued between them, which Boswell in part misinterpreted, but which the doctor in a letter afterward explained. As to that portion of their argument, Whether it were easier to write poetry or lexicography, the determination must be guided by the propensity of minds: and we may be rather surprised to find Dr. Johnson deciding in favor of the facility of writing poetry, when we may conceive that he possessed a mind peculiarly adapted to what may be called heavy work, and that in fact he did dictate his Dictionary with great rapidity. Certainly the preparation for such a work must have been arduous, but many excellent poets are more indebted to art than nature, and labor out a poem of apparent easy smoothness with great patience and difficulty.

The father of this poet was in the habit of reading continually to his blind son, and the latter was especially pleased with the works of Spenser, Milton, Prior, Pope, and Addison. Other persons showed great kindness in devoting their time to giving him information and instruction. An account of his life, character, and poems, was written by the Rev. Mr. Spence, a Prebendary of Durham, and for ten years Professor of Poetry in the University of Oxford; and it is a pleasing circumstance to find this church dignitary, of whose talent for criticism* Dr. Johnson held a high opinion, affectionately

* Spence's Anecdotes were read in manuscript by Dr. Johnson; and he derived "great assistance" from them in writing "The Lives of the Poets." The work was then in possession of the Duke of Newcastle, and not fully printed until 1820.

writing a memoir of the Presbyterian doctor of divinity Mr. Spence describes him as "one of the most exraordinary characters that has appeared in this or any other age," and lauds "his private character, which, were it more generally known, would recommend him more to the public esteem than the united talents of an accomplished writer." The fact of his attaining great excellence in poetry, although the chief inlets to poetical ideas were closed up to him, and all the visible beauties of creation long passed away from before his physical eye, could not but primarily attract the attention of his biographer, and of Dr. Johnson also. Mr. Spence thinks that all natural scenery must have been long blotted from his memory, and regards him as a prodigy: while Dr. Johnson supposes that all passages in his poetry which are descriptive of visible objects, "are combinations of what he has remembered of the works of other writers who could see." And Croker observes, that Johnson, no doubt, gives the true solution of Blacklock's power, which was *memory*, and not *miracle;* memory not of what he saw during the six years of his sight, but memory of what was read to him; and thus the difficulty of writing such poetry as he did write must have been much increased, and his success been more wonderful than his composition of sermons, and some other kinds of prose works.

He possessed the virtue of contentedness in a remarkable degree; but we may well conjecture that the loss of his eyesight was a sorrow that must have pressed heavily upon his mind. In one of his pieces of poetry, he says:

> "From these intrusive thoughts all pleasure flies,
> And leaves my soul benighted, like my eyes."

And in another, entitled a Soliloquy, he makes this lament:

> "To me these fair vicissitudes are lost,
> And grace and beauty blotted from my view;
> The verdant vale, the mountains, woods, and streams
> *One horrid blank appear.* The young-eyed Spring;
> Effulgent Summer; Autumn deck'd in wealth,
> To bless the toiling head; and Winter grand,
> With rapid storms, revolve in vain for me;

Nor the bright sun, nor all-embracing arch
Of heaven, *shall e'er these wretched orbs behold.*
Wide o'er my prospect rueful darkness breathes
Her inauspicious vapor: in whose shade
Fear, Grief, and Anguish, natives of her reign,
In social sadness gloomy vigils keep:
With them I walk, with them still doom'd to share
Eternal blackness, without hope of dawn."

It is gratifying to find that in the course of this very poem a gleam of light seems to break in upon his mind, especially in relation to his dread of arriving at a state of temporal destitution; and he expresses his confidence that the care of Providence which has hitherto supported him, will support and comfort him unto the end. Not only does he become satisfied with his condition, but recognizes some very great blessings in it: and thus he feels that chastenings and corrections are rather proofs of the love of God toward him. He was truly thankful to the LORD *and Samuel*; for, in a dedication of one of his books* to the Rev. Mr. Spence, he says: "It is to your kind patronage that I owe my introduction to the republic of letters, and to your benevolence, in some measure, my persent comfortable circumstances:" although he considered Dr. Stevenson of Edinburgh, a man of taste, as one of the first patrons of his education. There is also a memoir of him published in Anderson's British Poets.

It may be observed that usually blind men are cheerful, especially so as compared with the deaf, contrary to what might have been anticipated. The deaf seem commonly to be the victims of suspicion and miserable feeling, with distrust of their fellow-creatures. Lucas, in his Introduction to the "Inquiry after Happiness," speaks otherwise of his blindness: and how beatific are the allusions of Milton to this calamity!

"It is not miserable to be blind," said Milton, in reply to one of his cruel antagonists; "he only is miserable who can not acquiesce in his blindness with fortitude." His cheerful allusions to his calamity in the opening of the third book of

* The second part of his "Paraclesis."

"Paradise Lost" must be well known: though his eyes saw not, it was in his mind that he prayed for light:

> "There plant eyes, all mist from thence
> Purge and disperse, that I may see and tell
> Of things invisible to mortal sight."

But most sublime and affecting are those lines of our great epic poet which have been but lately discovered,* commencing,

> "I am old and blind!
> Men point at me as smitten by God's power:
> Afflicted and deserted of my kind;
> Yet am I not cast down."

No, he acknowledges the gracious goodness of God:

> "On my bended knee
> I recognize Thy purpose clearly shown:
> My vision Thou hast dimm'd that I may see
> Thyself—Thyself alone."

And the interior powers of his mind are increased:

> "Visions come and go;
> Shapes of resplendent beauty round me throng;
> From angel lips I seem to hear the flow
> Of soft and holy song."

But another glorious example of cheerful submission under the calamity of total blindness was set by Lucas, an estimable divine, whose writings have been cited in these pages. He says: "Should I struggle to rescue myself from that contempt to which this condition (wherein I may seem lost to the world and myself) exposes me; should I ambitiously affect to have my name march in the train of those all (though not all equally) great ones, Homer, Appius, Cn. Aufidius, Didymus, Walkup, Père Jean l'Aveugle, &c., all of them eminent for their service and usefulness, as well as for their afflictions of the same kind with mine; even this might seem almost a commendable infirmity; for the last

* Published in the recent Oxford edition of "Milton's Works."

thing a mind truly great and philosophical puts off, is the desire of glory. Hence Tacitus closes his divine character of Helvidius Priscus thus, 'Erant quibus appetentior famæ videretur, quando etiam sapientibus cupido gloriæ novissima exuitur.'

"I was almost induced to believe that this chastisement, which had removed me from the service of the altar, did at the same time discharge me from all duty owing to the public. But my good friend Mr. Lamb revived the dying sparks of a decaying zeal, and restored me to a proper sense of my duty in this point: for whether by design, or by Providence governing chance, I know not (for he never seemed to address or design the discourse particularly to me), he had ever and anon in his mouth this excellent principle, That the life of man is to be esteemed by its usefulness and serviceableness in the world. A sober reflection upon this wrought me up to a resolution strong enough to contemn all the difficulties which the loss of my sight could represent to me in an enterprise of this nature. Thus you see on what principles I became engaged in this work:* I thought it my duty to set myself some task, which might serve at once to divert my thoughts from a melancholy application to my misfortune. and entertain my mind with such a rational employment as might render me most easy to myself, and most servicable to all the world. Being now abundantly convinced that I am not released from the duty I owe to that body of which I am still a member, by being cut off from a great part of the pleasures and advantages of it: therefore like one that truly loves his country, when no way else is left him, he fights for it on his stumps; so will I, even in the remains of a broken body, express at least my affection for mankind, and breathe out my last gasp in their service."

The Walkup mentioned in the above extract was an Irish prelate before the Reformation, of whom Wilson has given some account. I believe he was blind from his birth; if so, it is curious how he could be received into Holy Orders. Mr. Lamb was a dissenter, who at length came over heart

* This is an extract from the address "To the Reader;" prefixed to Lucas's "Inquiry after Happiness." 4th edition, in 1704.

and soul, upon conviction, to the church. Lucas preached his funeral sermon. I suspect he is the same who is mentioned by Baxter in his Life, and whom Baxter tried in vain to settle in non-conformity. Lucas's resolution may be very cheering to many who are suffering from other afflictions than loss of sight: and it is astonishing what some good individuals, who are hardly ever free from bodily pain, do accomplish in the sacred cause of humanity and religion: they do "breathe out their last gasp in the service of mankind" with true and undaunted heroism.

Of Sterne he had a very poor opinion. A lady once ventured to ask him how he liked Yorick's sermons. "I know nothing about them, madam," was his reply. But some time afterward, forgetting himself, he severely censured them, and the lady very aptly retorted, "I understood you to say, sir, that you had never read them." "No, madam, I did read them, but it was in a stage coach. I should never have deigned even to look at them had I been *at large*."

Mr. Wickins records an opinion of the same tendency. "I showed him," he says, "Sterne's Sermons." "Sir," said he, "do you ever read any others?" "Yes, doctor, I read Sherlock, Tillotson, Beveridge, and others." "Ay, sir, *there* you drink the cup of salvation to the bottom; here you have merely the froth from the surface."

Sterne's other writings he equally disliked. "Nothing odd, he said, "will do long. 'Tristram Shandy' did not last." Another anecdote is most characteristic of Johnson's manner; his rudeness, and subsequent apology. Miss Monckton (afterward Countess of Cork) insisted that some of Sterne's writings were very pathetic. Johnson bluntly denied it. "I am sure," said she, "they have affected me. "Why," said, Johnson, smiling and rolling himself about, "that is because, dearest, you're a dunce." When she some time afterward mentioned this to him, he said, with equal truth and politeness, "Madam, if I had thought so, I certainly should not have said it."

Yet other eminent men thought well of Sterne. Of the celebrated father of Lord Chancellor Bathurst, we have this

anecdote* from Sterne's own hand. "He came up to me one day," he says, "as I was at the Prince of Wales's Court: 'I want to know you, Mr. Sterne, but it is fit you should know also who it is that wishes that pleasure. You have heard of an old Lord Bathurst, of whom your Popes and Swifts have sung and spoken so much. I have lived my life with geniuses of that caste, but have survived them; and despairing ever to find their equals, it is some years since I have cleared my accounts and shut up my books, with thoughts of never opening them again. But you have kindled a desire in me of opening them once more before I die, which now I do: so go home and dine with me!'"

Sterne in his sermons was satirical on Methodists, Quakers, and Roman Catholics. He speaks of the former as "illiterate mechanics, who, as a witty divine said of them, were much fitter to *make* a pulpit than to get into one, able so to frame their nonsense to the nonsense of the times, as to beget an opinion in their followers, not only that they prayed and preached by inspiration,† but that the most common actions of their lives were set about in the Spirit of the Lord."‡ He goes on to say, that the opinions of the Methodists are but a republication, with some alterations, of the extravagant conceits of Quakers, which he regards as enthusiastic. "The truest definition," he writes,§ "you can give of Popery is, that it is a system put together and contrived to operate upon men's weaknesses and passions, and thereby to pick their pockets, and leave them in a fit condition for its arbitrary designs." In his next sermon he still further attacks the Roman Catholics and Methodists, charging the latter with more than papal uncharitableness.

* Lord Campbell's Lives of the Chancellors, vol. v. p. 434.

† The case of Norton *v.* Kelly, referred to in Lord Campbell's Life of Lord Northington, is a very remarkable one of religious imposture. The defendant, among other inducements, had written to the plaintiff, a lady, "*Your former pastor has, I hear, excommunicated you; but put yourself in my congregation, wherein dwells the fullness of God.*" The invariable style of his letters was, "all is to be completed by love and union." Lord Northington, then Lord Henley, concludes, "One of his counsel, with some ingenuity, tried to shelter him under the denomination of '*an independent preacher.*' I have tried in this decree to spoil his *independency!*"—*Lives of the Chancellors*, vol. v. p. 191.

‡ Vol. ii. Sermon 25.

§ Sermon 37.

"Faith," he continues, "the distinguishing characteristic of a Christian, is defined by them, not as a rational assent of the understanding to truths which are established by indisputable authority, but as a violent persuasion of the mind, that they are instantaneously become the children of God; that the whole score of their sins is for ever blotted out, without the payment of one tear of repentance. Pleasing doctrine this to the fears and passions of mankind; promising fair to gain proselytes of the vicious and impenitent!"

It may be feared that there is too much truth in this remark of Sterne's; and perhaps it may not be unapplicable to some preachers in the Church of England. We do not desire that dissenters should bear the whole blame of advancing false doctrine or light conceits. But, turning from these accusations, we shall find a good deal of sterling sense in Sterne's sermons; and there is one on the Thirtieth Day of January (the anniversary of the martyrdom of King Charles the First), which would not have been displeasing, in its sentiments, at least, to Dr. Johnson himself.

The notice of some inferior divines and writers may be passed by; and we refrain also from entering on the controversy concerning Milton: Milton is in himself a giant, and the subject gigantic. Several of our leading divines are not named by Dr. Johnson in "Boswell's Life," but we can not argue from their omission that they were unknown to Dr. Johnson. It need only be stated, that the names do not appear of Latimer, Ridley, Fuller, Andrewes, Mede, John Smith* (of Cambridge), Whitgift, Jackson,† Chillingworth, Hall, Cosin, Cudworth, Scott,‡ Stillingfleet, Beveridge, Bull, Ken, Bingham, Waterland, &c., &c., with others who form the glory of the church in theological literature, and its redoubtable bulwark against the assaults of Rome on the one hand, and dissent, as well as infidelity, on the other.

* So highly eulogized by Alexander Knox.

† Jones of Nayland speaks of Dr. Jackson's works as "a magazine of theological learning, every where penned with great elegance and dignity, so that his style is a pattern of perfection."—*Life of Bp. Horne*, p. 75.

‡ Addison found out the virtues of Dr. John Scott, and describes his "Christian Life" as "one of the finest and most rational schemes of divinity that is written in our tongue, or in any other."—*Spectator*, No. 447, vol. vi. p. 194.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### LORD CHANCELLOR THURLOW.

Men of high rank simply, gain honor to themselves by their notice of others who are eminent in the walks of literature, whereas those who are celebrated both for rank and learning have less temptation to seek fame in this way; and, especially, the lasting fame of Lord Chancellors must mainly depend on the soundness of their legal decisions, and the part they may bear in the politics of the times in which they live. It is thus the more gratifying to find with what high regard Lord Chancellor Thurlow contemplated the literary exertions of Dr. Johnson, and sought, in an hour of apparent need, to meet his wishes, at the request of friends. It must be remembered, too, that Johnson originally derived his pension from George the Third through the Marquis of Bute, to whom it was at first suggested by Lord Thurlow's rival, Mr. Wedderburn, afterward Earl of Loughborough. Thurlow, however might well be in good humor at this time; for, but the year before, Lord Loughborough, who had been appointed First Commissioner when the Great Seal was put in Commission during the Coalition Ministry,* had been obliged, much to his chagrin, to deliver it up to his bitter and reckless opponent.

Boswell observed rightly, when he addressed Lord Thurlow "as well assured of his lordship's, regard for Dr. Johnson;" for his lordship, in answer, speaks highly of Johnson's merit, and the reflection it would be on all if such a man should perish for want of the means to take care of his health; and to Sir Joshua Reynolds his lordship writes of the pleasure he felt in contributing to the health and comfort of a man, "whom," he says, "I venerate sincerely and highly for every part, without exception, of his exalted character." Johnson, in

* Fox and Lord North, under the Duke of Portland, 1783.

turn, asserted that he was proud to own his obligations to "such a mind;" and concluded his letter to his lordship, saying, "I have received a benefit which only men like you are able to bestow. I shall now live, *mihi carior*, with a higher opinion of my own merit."

More than a year before, he had said, "Depend upon it, sir, it is when you come close to a man in conversation that you discover what his real abilities are: to make a speech in a public assembly is a knack. Now I honor Thurlow, sir: Thurlow is a fine fellow: he fairly puts his mind to yours."

And both of these great men resembled each other in some respects; the want of religion in one, and the possession of it in the other, constituting a marked difference. Both were rebellious, in college days, against the respective authorities; both were thorough clubbists; and Thurlow, as Lord Campbell remarks, "like his contemporary, Dr. Johnson, took great pains in gladiatorial discussion," and both were acknowledged to be "lions"* in their chosen and distinguished paths of life. Of Thurlow, too, it is recorded, as well as it has been of Johnson, that "however rough he might be with men, he

* "An old, free-speaking companion of his (Thurlow's), well known at Lincoln's-inn, would say, 'I met the great Law Lion this morning, going to Westminster, and bowed to him; but he was so busy reading in his coach what his *provider* had supplied him with, that he took no notice of me.'" "So fiercely did he spring on a luckless counsel or solicitor, that he generally went by the name of the 'Tiger;' and sometimes they would, out of compliment, call him the 'Lion,' adding, that Hargrave was his *provider*. This was the learned editor of Coke upon Littleton."—*Lord Campbell's Lives of the Chancellors*, vol. v. p. 633, 522.

In no part of Johnson's life and habits could he, by any conceit, be denominated "Tiger." No; he was the veritable "Lion" all through his career, and in the generous and sublime tenor of his arduous life surpasses Thurlow.

On fighting a duel, Thurlow is described as standing up to his adversary *like an elephant*. His physical courage, like Johnson's, was great; but the latter could not explain "the rationality of dueling."

The excellent William Wilberforce has this entry in his Diary: "At the levee, and then dined at Pitt's—sort of cabinet dinner—was often thinking that pompous Thurlow, and elegant Carmarthen, would soon appear in the same row with the poor fellow who waited behind their chairs."—*Life of Wilberforce, by his Sons.*

was the politest person in the world to ladies." And the following words spoken by a kinsman of Lord Thurlow, might be justly applied to Johnson; and, indeed, are almost the counterpart of what he did say of himself: "He could assume the sternest character, if necessary, or the sweetest smile I ever beheld. This stern exterior was, I have often thought, put on to cover the most kind and feeling heart: and his real nature was but little known, but to those who had the happiness of living in his society." There was something so terrible in Thurlow's look and voice (as described by Lord Campbell), and he spoke with so much emphasis his pointed severities, that often his object was gained without real argument; yet, Dr. Johnson was his superior, if we may trust a contemporary, in effectiveness. Craddock, who knew both intimately, says, "I was always more afraid of Johnson than of Thurlow: for though the latter was sometimes very rough and course, yet the decisive stroke of the former left a mortal wound behind it." Many, indeed, quailed before both these great conversationists: and Horne Tooke, one of the best talkers of his time, was quite overawed by Thurlow's look and tone of voice alone: he was (it may be said to theological readers) the Atterbury both of law courts and of society. Lord Thurlow, in common with Johnson, dared to let his poverty, or the lowness of his parentage, be known. He had a just contempt, Lord Campbell tells us, for the vanity of new men pretending that they are of ancient blood; and some one, attempting to flatter him by trying to make out that he was descended from Thurloe, Cromwell's secretary, who was a Suffolk man, "Sir," said he, "there were two Thurlows in that part of the country, who flourished about the same time: Thurloe the secretary, and Thurlow the carrier. I am descended from the last." Yet, when in the House of Lords he was reproached with his plebeian extraction, by the Duke of Grafton, how nobly, after stating the dignities to which he had, by his own exertions, arrived, he said, "Nay, even in that character alone, in which the noble duke would think it an affront to be considered—as a MAN—I am at this moment as respectable—I beg leave to add, I am at this moment as much respected—as the proudest peer I now look

down upon." And we are informed that he was ever more cautious of speaking offensively among inferiors than among the great.*

Lord Thurlow never wrote a book, not even a pamphlet, but he seems to have been fond of literary society. After his entire ejection from office, he consoled his mind with classical literature, and a voracious reading of novels; and, in one instance, so interested was he in the plot, that he dispatched his groom from Dulwich to London, after ten o'clock at night, for the concluding volume, that he might know the fate of the heroine before trying to go to sleep. Other great politicians and lawyers, such as Fox and Sir James Macintosh, have found time to peruse nearly all this species of the lighter literature of their day: a kind of reading which is, in some degree, now superseded by the enlarged newspapers. He admired and venerated Dr. Johnson, and befriended Crabbe: but, to his shame, overlooked the poet Cowper, who, to the last, affectionately adored him. Perhaps the poet's lines against the iniquitous slave-trade, a matter on which Thurlow spoke strongly, prevented the patronage of the Lord Chancellor: and we know that his lordship also disliked, what he styles, "your pious heroes." He might have tolerated Johnson's religious views, but those of Cowper would have been to him, we may fear, mere cant and verbiage. Thurlow was not a religious man; probably he was a skeptic: and in his disappointed old age he missed the consolations of religion, together with all the fortitude and resignation of character that it inspires. The difference of disposition with which Lord Hardwicke bore the loss of the highest judicial office, and his anxious concern only for the good of his country, place him in amiable contrast with Thurlow; although the former seems not to have cultivated either religion or classical literature, and certainly to have behaved in an inconsiderate, if not heartless manner, toward Thomson the poet, who, like himself, was a Whig in politics, and who wrote nothing, as in the case of Cowper, which could have been offensive to his opinions. Lord Hardwicke was a better lawyer, and a milder and more consistent man

* Campbell, p. 661.

than Thurlow, throughout his career; but he scorned or neglected literary men,* and they have, in consequence, not

* Not thus was it with another ennobled lawyer. Lord Campbell, in his "Lives of the Chief Justices of England," says of Murray (afterward Lord Mansfield), "The new Solicitor General and M.P found a mortifying difficulty in keeping up the intercourse he wished with his literary associates: and Pope, when publishing a new edition of the "Dunciad," introduced him (although with respect and tenderness), among those who, from their classical attainments and their genius, might *have gained high intellectual distinction, but who had sunk into lawyers and politicians.*"

Lord Mansfield was a wonderful man, but he could not contend with Lord Chatham, who to fiery genius joined great eloquence, and signal moral and physical courage. Pope presented Murray with a miniature portrait of Betterton the celebrated actor, painted by himself. It is to be feared this invaluable relic of Pope's art in painting was destroyed when Lord Mansfield's house was set fire to by the rioters in 1780.

Bishop Warburton observed, "Mr. Pope had all the warmth of affection for this great lawyer, and indeed no man ever more deserved to have a poet for his friend," &c. Pope, Murray, Bolingbroke, and Warburton, on one occasion dined together in Lincoln's Inn Fields (Murray's residence), and "O for a Boswell," exclaims Lord Campbell, "to have given us their conversation!"

Hannah More tells a good anecdote of Pitt. "In the midst of all these cares and distractions," she says, "a friend of mine called on Pitt the other night. He found him alone, gay and cheerful, his mind totally disengaged from the scenes in which he had passed the day. He was reading Milton aloud with great emphasis, and he said his mind was so totally engaged in Paradise, that *he had forgotten there were any people in the world but Adam and Eve!*"

Hannah More subjoins, "This seems a trifle, but it is an indication of a great mind, so entirely to discharge itself of such a load of care, and to find pleasure in so innocent and sublime an amusement." *Memoirs of Hannah More*, vol. ii. p. 142.

Shall it be said of the immortal William Pitt, what we have written of Edmund Burke and George Canning in the fourteenth page of this book?

This anecdote is told of one, not of the same *calibre* as Pitt.

There is a monumental inscription beneath the statue of Pitt in Guildhall, written by Canning. It closes after this manner,

"Though Prime Minister during twenty years,
He died poor."

It is said the inscription was submitted to a Committee in the city of London for their approval. The Committee of course highly approved of it, but one of them modestly begged leave to suggest that instead of the words "He died poor," it might be better to substitute the words,

"He died in indigent circumstances!"

remembered him ; and the legal, as well as the military hero, will not descend in universal fame to posterity without the aid of the poet. Out of a thousand men who now know the name, and reverence the mind of Dr. Johnson, not ten may be acquainted with the name or talent of Lord Hardwicke, and we may well suppose, that those who are acquainted with Lord Hardwicke's name, know that of Johnson also ; while the vast number to whom Johnson s name is a familiar word, absolutely have never heard the name of Hardwicke. Hear Lord Campbell :* " With all his titles, and all his wealth, how poor is his fame in comparison of that of his contemporary, SAMUEL JOHSNON, whom he would not have received at his Sunday evening parties in Powis House, or invited to hear his state stories at Wimpole's !" And with what nobleness of disposition, manifesting that he possesses " a soul above buttons," does Campbell add : " A man desirous of solid fame would rather have written the ' Rambler,' the ' Vanity of Human Wishes,' ' Rasselas,' or the ' Lives of the Poets,' than have delivered all Lord Hardwicke's speeches in Parliament, and all his judgments in the Court of Chancery, although the author had been sometimes obliged to pass the night on the ashes of a glass-house, and at last thought himself passing rich with his £300 pension, while the peer lived in splendor, and died worth a million." And he further adds in a note, " Hardwicke is to Johnson as the most interesting Life that could be written of Lord Hardwicke is to Boswell's ' Life of Johnson :' the proportion of a farthing candle to the meridian sun." With how peculiar a grace and worth do such sentences proceed from the pen of a man of Lord Campbell's eminent knowledge and practice of law ! though it is from eminent men that we look for noble-minded language ; and they are the more valuable, inasmuch as he was not led away by a blind or bigoted admiration † of the giant in literature. No one can read Lord Campbell's

* Vol. v. p. 167, Life of Lord Hardwicke.

† As where he prefers the pithy conclusion of a memorable speech of Lord Hardwicke's, as given in Archbishop Secker's manuscript notes, to the more lengthened paraphrastic rendering of Dr. Johnson. See p. 88.

"Lives of the Chancellors" without predicting an immortality to his own name, not only as accruing from the fame of the illustrious personages described, but more from the full and interesting details given after great research, and the generous as well as just remarks, which accompany their histories; truly affording to the intelligent of each successive generation a book not only of instruction and learned information, but also of exceeding entertainment and delight. Fox thought that no man could *be* so wise as Thurlow *looked*, and neither can we imagine the generation to come that would be, or look, too wise to relish these volumes of biography. Still Johnson, single-handed, will ever attract more of the attention of posterity than any one of the Chancellors, or probably than all of them put together; yet he, even in his hey-day of fame, could not help for a moment wishing that he had been a "law lord." Had he been one, he would have been distinguished indeed, if we only form a judgment from the cases he drew up for Mr. Boswell; and we may say, with great degree of certainty, that he would have attained that eminence which would have placed him in the fortunate category of having had Campbell as his biographer. From the period of this pattern of all judicial excellence, entire freedom from corruption and bribery has been continued. Lord Campbell says, "Spotless purity, not only an absence from bribery and corruption, but freedom from undue influence, and an earnest desire to do justice, may at that time, *and ever afterward*, be considered as belonging to all English judges." This was not the case before.

Old Hugh Latimer, the ever honest and fearless bishop, mercilessly attacked the proud and venal judges of his time.*

* During the same reign (Edward the Sixth), that celebrated clergyman, Bernard Gilpin, preaches against the same corruptions, in the same plain and uncomprising manner as Hugh Latimer, as we learn from his notable sermon preached before the king, on the first Sunday after the Epiphany, 1552, from the text of Luke ii. 41–50. It required true moral courage in both of them to preach, as they so firmly did, against the overwhelming corruption and carelessness that prevailed among all classes of nobility, of judges, magistrates, and ministers, in those times; and the anecdote of the Bishop of Worcester, in regard to his befriending the cause of the poor man, must be well known.

He could not abide their velvet coats and upskips, but besought the Lord Protector himself to hear causes. "View your judges," he says in his second Sermon, "and hear poor men's causes. And you, proud judges, hearken what God saith in his holy book. 'Hear ye the poor,' saith he, 'as well as the rich.' Mark that saying, thou proud judge! Hell will be full of such judges, if they repent not and amend." In his third Sermon, he tells the story of Cambyses, who avenged a poor widow by ordering the judge to be flayed, and his skin to be laid on the chair of judgment, that all judges afterward should sit on the same skin. "Surely it was a goodly sign," says Latimer, "the sign of the judge's skin. I pray God we may once see the sign of the skin in England." In his fifth Sermon, he again lashes them. "If a judge," he says, "should ask me the way to hell, I would show him this way; first by covetousness, then bribes, then perverting of judgment: but there lacks a fourth thing," he continues, "to make up the mess, which, so God help me, if I were judge, should be a Tyburn tippet. Were it the judge of the King's Bench, my Lord Chief Justice of England, yea, were it my Lord Chancellor himself, to Tyburn with him." Happily, in no modern instance have Latimer's coarse words been needed; both Hardwicke and Thurlow were honest as the day, as regards such charges; but, methinks, more than to these, Johnson's own lines would have applied to himself, had he ever become a retiring chancellor,

> "Calm conscience then his former life survey'd,
> And recollected toils endear'd the shade,
> 'Till Nature called him to the general doom,
> And virtue's sorrow dignified his tomb."

## CHAPTER XIV.

### OPINIONS ON DISSENT AND DISSENTERS.

Dr. Johnson, it must be remembered, lived during a period when dissent, in great degree, was rather a commencing than an established institution: perhaps it is more correct to say, that it was a revival of an old error: great lethargy had crept into the dissent that already existed, as well as into the sanctuaries of the church; and religion generally, as with the Mediæval church, was to all appearance in a state of suspended animation. There was need, then, that a spirit should go forth, and lift up a great cry, ay, better to utter very screams over the seeming corpse, than to leave it alone to the gaze of an exulting and scoffing nation. Hence, perhaps more within than without the church, a loud shout of awakening from slumber arose; the Venns, Romaines, Topladys, Berridges, Walkers, Herveys, Madans, Newtons, &c., breathed the breath of life into the dry bones on one side of doctrinal excitement, with the external help of Whitfield, Doddridge, Ingham, Harris, Cennick, Rowland Hill, &c., all Calvinists to the backbone, whom Lady Huntingdon so largely favored, and Horace Walpole elegantly caricatured; while, still in the church, Wesley, Fletcher of Madeley, and their followers took the field, and with more zeal than judgment, preached to the multitudes of the nation, with extreme energy what they conceived to be the vital doctrines of the blessed Gospel; and from the exertions of all these, churchmen and dissenters arose, stood upon their feet, an exceeding great and imposing army.

Still, this was a convulsive coming to life of the corpse—it was a galvanic resuscitation—inwardly with all the agony of returning sensation to a drowned man, and outwardly with all the grimace and tortuous writhing which would attend on the reviving work within. No wonder, then, that

much occurred which would tend to horrify and scare sober and pious Christians: for many would say, Let us retire awhile and not gaze upon these dreadful contortions of the countenance, and these awful strugglings of the body with its returning inner life; let us wait until health be restored, the face calm and rational, the body sound and standing erect in perfect strength; for, while a process is required of which we stand in no need, let the proper physicians and attendants gather round, but let not us, who can do no good, go and indulge a morbid curiosity, and which ultimately might, in the common sympathy of our uncertain nature, effect harm within our own minds and souls, by seducing us from soberness and settledness into eccentricity and discontentedness. For in these days, it must be borne in mind, there were very many real Christian hearts beating in the church with all the faith, hope, and charity, of which Christian men are capable: and to these, the new doings, and the new processes of alarming and arousing the dead and slumbering ones, seemed to partake of much of the hideous and the horrible. It was what Mrs. Radcliffe and her crew were to the common world of readers, not only alluring them from the perusal of wholesome and rational literature, but rendering them fearful of their own selves and of all other people: afraid to walk out by day, or sit in the house by night; and when the dread hour of midnight arrived, and the clock struck one, oh what fearfulness and trembling, what apparitions, hollow groans, and shrieks of subterraneous victims, at once agonizing and appalling! and rendering the poor creatures incapable of the exercise of the truly heroic and milder virtues of fortitude, resignation and discretion.

Now Dr. Johnson was one of the soberly religious minds of the age. He looked upon the church as a loyal establishment, guiding the solid and prudential convictions of mankind for the present existence, and assuredly teaching that line of doctrine, and exhorting to that kind of disposition, which must certainly be adapted for the heavenly and eternal life. He could not abide the carnal excitements and eccentricities of men; and instead of standing in a street, or on a common, to list to the fire and eloquence of a Whit-

field, he would have said with David, in his own resolute and self-humbling way, "But as for me, I will come into Thine house, even upon the multitude of Thy mercy: and in Thy fear will I worship toward Thy holy temple."

But while all this amazing and confounding work was going on in English districts, Dr. Johnson had an opportunity of witnessing a more sober and decent settlement of dissent in Presbyterian Scotland; for even Adam Clarke had not yet set foot on the Shetland Isles. We can collect, then Dr. Johnson's opinion of two kinds of religious teaching, Presbyterianism and Methodism, more to be treated of now than the evangelical resurrection, or as he might have termed it *in*surrection, within the pale of the church; and while we know that he, as a devout Christian, would have wished to have seen one church and one faith existing, and to have witnessed all men alive to the solemn requirements and realities of these, as bearing on that practical godliness which has the promise of the life that now is, as well as of that which is to come, we shall at the same time see the manner of his temper toward the existing contrarieties, and the sentiments that proceeded, often abruptly, from his mighty intellect: a temper and intellect that could not suppress an opinion from false motives; that could not keep back the warning words of charity, through fear of the bugbear accusation of intolerance or bigotry. No, he must cherish a strong thought; he must have a decided side; he must hold the truth, and give a cause. His illustrious friend Burke has said well, and the comment of an earnest divine* may also be given, "That those persons should tolerate all opinions who think none to be of estimation, is a matter of small merit. Equal neglect is not impartial kindness. The species of benevolence which arises from contempt, is not true

* Hugh James Rose, who continues on Indifference, "Where that flourishes and abounds, nothing else will; for it dries up every source of fertility, the gushing spring of human affections, the gentle dew of grace from heaven. There will be no love: no love of man, no love of God . . . . no gratitude for deliverance, no love of the deliverer, no zeal for his honor, no desire, and no readiness, to act, or to suffer for it, or for the good of man." Sermon 6, preached before the University of Cambridge.

charity." "What, then," observes Rose, "is its true name? It is, simply, indifference; and from indifference cometh no good thing! Come any thing but that! Come the wild dreams of superstition; come the savage excesses of the enthusiast; come the stern rigors of the fanatic; which, with all their evils, still leave the heart something to love and reverence, still leave it unabated trust in good and the Author of good; but come not withering, palsying hand of 'indifference' upon the Christian's heart!" Dr. Johnson's profoundness of investigation, and the active, constraining principles of religion ever moving his heart and influencing his conduct, give a loud lie to any charge of indifference; and very often it may be, that the very warmth and intenseness of a man's feelings on the question of all questions, lays him open to an accusation of bigotry and intolerance from the more superficial and less considerate minds of the period in which he showed his strong attachment to a righteous and all-important cause.

The first great question to be settled, is that of toleration, or religious liberty. Too often this matter is rather decided by numbers and force, than by right and peace. Dissentients increase, and privileges which were denied to them when they were few, must now be granted. But, without paying deference to the few or the many, the question is, on which side does the right lie? for the multitude is usually tyrannical, and therefore the protection of the few is often, and always should be in cases of persecution, the aim and act of the law in every country possessing a free constitution.

Dr. Johnson held, that every society has a right, *through its agent*, the magistrate, to preserve public peace and order, and therefore to prevent the propagation of opinions which have a dangerous tendency. The magistrate might be theologically or morally wrong in prohibiting the extension of certain opinions, but he would be politically right. Peace, order, and the conformity to the rules of society, are the first things to be cared for. Dr. Mayo said, "I am of opinion, sir, that every man is entitled to liberty of conscience in religion; and that the magistrate can not restrain that right."

Johnson answered, "Sir, I agree with you. Every man has a right to liberty of conscience, and with that the magis-

trate can not interfere.* People confound liberty of thinking with liberty of talking, nay, with liberty of preaching. Every man has a physical right to think as he pleases, for it can not be discovered how he thinks. He has not a moral right, for he ought to inform himself, and think justly. But, sir, no member of a society has a right to *teach* any doctrine contrary to what the society holds to be true."

If he does so teach, he also held, whether he be individually right or wrong, he may be punished.

In the above definition of liberty of conscience, Dr. Johnson appears too confined. True, a man may *think* what he likes, because no man can tell what another man's thoughts are, but it is liberty to expression of thought that is contended for. At the same time, we can very plainly see, that no man should be permitted "to *teach* any doctrine contrary to what the society holds to be true." No, a man could not conscientiously do so; he must, of necessity, go out of the society; but will the society, or any other party, have a right to persecute him after he is gone out? Thus the first Christians came out from among the Jews, and the Protestants from among the Roman Catholics: for the same persons could not teach Christianity and remain as Jews, or propagate the tenets of Protestantism and hold with the Roman Catholic Church.

Dr. Mayo, however, was perplexed, and replied to Dr. Johnson, "Then, sir, we are to remain always in error, and truth never can prevail; and the magistrate was right in persecuting the first Christians."

* Lord Mansfield said (and his speech was heartily approved of by Lord Camden), "Conscience, my lords, is not controllable by human laws, nor amenable to human tribunals. Persecution, or attempts to force conscience, will never produce conviction, and can only be calculated to make hypocrites or martyrs."—*Lord Campbell's Lives of the Chancellors*, vol. v. p. 238.

Acasto (Otway's Orphan, gives idle rules to his family for their conduct in life, calculated to produce misanthropy, rendering them odious:

> "If you have religion, keep it to yourselves:
> Atheists will else make use of *toleration*,
> And laugh you out on't."

Yet, we may ask with satisfaction, Are there not fewer atheists now than in the time of Charles the Second?

Johnson answered, "Sir, the only method by which religious truth can be established is by martyrdom. The magistrate has a right to enforce what he thinks, and he who is conscious of the truth has a right to suffer. I am afraid there is no way of ascertaining the truth but by persecution on the one hand, and enduring it on the other."

This is perfectly true in regard to the state of the civil law in most countries, and also in relation to our own country during Dr. Johnson's time; but surely now there is no civil persecution so long as the feelings and privileges of society are not outraged, there is perfect toleration for Jews, Unitarians, Roman Catholics, Swedenborgians, Mormonists, &c., or any other sect that may arise; only there may be a species of private and domestic persecution or irritation which no civil law can reach or prevent. The test of martyrdom is over as regards resistance to, or non-compliance with the authorities of the country.

Dr. Johnson proceeded to define the gradation of thinking, preaching, and action. At last a gentleman wished to know, Whether there was not a material difference as to toleration of opinions which lead to action, and opinions merely speculative? For instance, would it be wrong in the magistrate to tolerate those who preach against the doctrines of the Trinity? The doctor was at first offended by the introduction of such a subject in a mixed society, but afterward replied, "Why then, sir, I think that permitting men to preach any opinion contrary to the doctrine of the Established Church, tends, in a certain degree, to lessen the authority of the church, and, consequently, to lessen the influence of religion." "It may be considered," said the gentleman, "whether it would not be politic to tolerate in such a case." JOHNSON.—"Sir, we have been talking of *right;* this is another question. I think it is *not* politic to tolerate in such a case."

Yet, if it be proved that men have a right to hold and to express different religious opinions, no matter what the religious opinions be, it must be right to tolerate the holding and expression of those opinions. Our Lord and His apostles never compelled any one to believe what He or they advanced: all was invitation, beseeching, persuasion.

St. Paul speaks of those whose *mouths must be stopped* (Titus i. 11), that is, they must be confuted by sound arguments; and if they were afterward to be silenced by episcopal authority, we may be sure that the apostle never meant that compulsion, in the absence of earnest persuasion, should be resorted to. He also delivered over Hymenæus and Alexander unto Satan on account of their false doctrine, or apostasy; these were men who *spoke evil* (*βλασφημεῖν*, 1 Tim. i. 20), of the truth, and therefore could not, of course, be regarded as members of a community that held the truth, *i. e.*, the religion of Christ. Such men could not, at this time, either in conscience or in reason, be members of the Christian church.

But no one regarded the freedom of the will more than our blessed Lord: *Ye will not come unto me*, was his pathetic lamentation. We can well understand that differences of opinion must not only weaken a church, or ruin a sect, but also, act, in a great degree, to the detriment of religion, especially where the differences are not managed with temper: but still, unity of opinion should be voluntary to be of any avail, and any system of compulsion used for agreement, would be productive of far worse evils than the permission of contrariety of creed could bring about :* indeed, but for the

* When Dr. Courayer, a Roman Catholic clergyman, remarkable for his moderation, charity, and temper concerning religious affairs, fled to England after giving offense, by his publications, to the Cardinal De Noailles, he observed to Archbishop Wake, that England "was a bad country for a religious man to reside in, because of the unhappy differences in religion, by which mutual charity is destroyed; and the liberty which many take of speaking against the doctrines of Christianity, and corrupting the minds of the people."—*Bowyer*, p. 84.

Courayer's work on the Validity of the Ordinations of the English (Rivingtons), is pretty well known. He says in his Preface, "The thing in question is no less than to know whether the Church of England, formerly so illustrious, and even now so respectable, for the enlightenment of her prelates and the erudition of her clergy, is without a succession, without a hierarchy, and without a ministry." He also says, "Having always found in the greater part of the members of the Church of England great understanding, and a very extensive knowledge of ecclesiastical antiquity, &c., I reckon it my duty to do them the justice they deserve, and to open a way to peace, which our posterity will perhaps follow with more success."

allowance of secession from a church, it would be probable that the insincerity, lukewarmness, or impatience of restraint long pent up and increasing, would at last burst forth, and in its very fury destroy the church itself.

At another time, when giving his usual opinion, that the state has a right to regulate the religion of the people, who are the children of the state, he allowed, after looking to other states than our own, and alluding to a Brahmin in particular, that he had got no further than this, "Every man has a right to utter what he thinks truth, and every other man has a right to knock him down for it. Martyrdom is the test."

And in support of his distinction between liberty of conscience and liberty of teaching, he said, "Consider, sir, if you have children whom you wish to educate in the principles of the Church of England, and there comes a Quaker who tries to pervert them to his principles, you would drive away the Quaker. You would not trust to the predomination of right which you believe is in your opinions; you will keep wrong out of their heads. Now the vulgar are the children of the state. If any one attempts to teach them doctrines contrary to what the state approves, the magistrate may, and ought to restrain him."

As far as regards England this matter need not be debated, for the state allows its children to be taught as they please. The state does not wish to drive away the Quaker, or any other religionist. But, were it otherwise, we must bear in mind that there is little analogy in fact between *children* of a family, and *children* of the state. The one is young and unknowing: the other adult, and, for the most part, educated. A parent would probably leave the choice of religion open to his adult sons, and at all events, he would feel that it would be most undesirable to enforce it. A man may very well say, I wish to see toleration of all opinions among mankind at large, although I do not like to practice it in my own young family circle: I know well enough that the matured mind must be left to cherish its own sincere convictions, but at the same time I shall endeavor to train up my young children in those doctrines which my own conscientious con-

victions assure me are right. May not this be said with reason and consistency? For while he claims a course of action for himself, he grants to others the right to pursue their course; neither yielding one atom of what each believes to be the truth.

Mr. Seward asked, "Would you restrain private conversation, sir?"

JOHNSON.—"Why, sir, it is difficult to say where private conversation begins, and where it ends. If we three should discuss even the great question concerning the existence of a Supreme Being by ourselves, we should not be restrained, for that would be to put an end to all improvement. But if we should discuss it in the presence of ten boarding-school girls, and as many boys, I think the magistrate would do well to put us in the stocks, to finish the debate there."

Most certainly: but see here, on his own showing, the distinction between children in the domestic sense, and the children of the state!* He himself a child of the state.

Boswell mentioned his having heard an eminent physician, who was himself a Christian, argue in favor of universal toleration, and maintain that no man could be hurt by another man's differing from him in opinion.

JOHNSON.—"Sir, you are to a certain degree hurt by knowing that even one man does not believe."

Such was his kindness.

On the whole, we see that Dr. Johnson granted liberty of conscience, but not liberty to preach doctrines contrary to the belief of the essential ones of the Established Church. If a

* It may be said, "that the fact is overlooked that the majority of our population have no means of forming a right judgment. Sure to go wrong if left to themselves, are they to be left to themselves to go wrong, to preserve a theory of private judgment?" We can answer, You must do what you can to educate them in the right, and to persuade them to adopt and follow what is right, but you can do no more; you can not coerce them; you can not treat grown-up persons (though in reality but children in understanding) as you would treat children. Dr. Johnson would have silenced the school-girls, but who could silence him? And yet a wrong opinion issuing from Dr. Johnson's mouth would be far more dangerous than the same from the mouth of an illiterate person, or from one who had little or no influence on the minds of others.

man did so, he should be prepared to suffer martyrdom; and for this, as he said, should feel persuaded that he has a particular delegation from Heaven. We have perfect and imperfect obligations. "It is a duty to give to the poor; but no man can say how much another should give to the poor; in the same way it is a duty to instruct the ignorant, and of consequence to convert infidels to Christianity: but no man in the common course of things is obliged to carry this to such a degree as to incur the danger of martyrdom, as no man is obliged to strip himself to the shirt in order to give charity." Well, then, there must be the delegation from Heaven, and a man usually thinks he has this, so that this requirement abates little from the limits of toleration, or the obligations of martyrdom.

And now a few words on toleration in general. In the first place, we may certainly hold that Scripture sanctions not the infliction of civil penalties in order to enforce an external unity in religion. Scripture allows the Christian church a right of excommunication, but not a right over the property, liberty, or life of the excommunicated. All civil laws, then, for the prevention of schism, or for the extirpation of religious opinions, are purely human; and are only justifiable in those extreme cases in which the propagation of such opinions would be found to be detrimental to the safety of society, or the preservation of its welfare and peace.

Let the knowledge of this absence of Scriptural right be foremost in our minds, and let us own, that the very thing which the church can not scripturally perform by her own legislature when existent, she can not consistently do by that which is now her legislature, the Houses of Parliament. In times past, we know that if a Calvinist in one country, or a Jesuit in another, were caught preaching, they were put to death; or if men doubted on the matter of transubstantiation, they were burned; and yet, if we look at the severest passages in Scripture, that of Deut. xiii. 1–10, "If among you a prophet arise," &c.; or that of Matt. xviii. 17, "If he neglect to hear the church," &c.; or that of Titus iii. 10, "A man that is an heretic," &c.; we shall find that while the two latter only sanction expulsion from the ecclesiastical

society and individual companionship, the former, though involving a command for the summary infliction of death, yet is not applicable to these cases; for neither the Calvinist, nor Jesuit, nor common Protestant, besought the people to follow strange gods. In violation, however, of the requirement for the carrying out of this command, and with no other Scriptural order more stringent, we are told that the Counselor Dubourg, the monk Jehan Cauvin (known to us as John Calvin), the Spanish physician Servetus, the Calabrian Gentilis, all worshiped the same God; and yet, the president Minard caused Counselor Dubourg to be burned; and Dubourg's friends caused President Minard to be assassinated: John Calvin caused the physician Servetus to be roasted, and this act was approved of even by the mild and dispassionate Melancthon: and Calvin had likewise the consolation to be a principal means of bringing the Calabrian Gentilis to the block: and the successors of John Calvin burnt Anthony. It is well asked, Was it reason, or piety, or justice, that committed these murders? There was no sanction from the Word of God: for, from Deut. xiii. we could derive no authority for putting even infidels to death at the present time, any more than to stone the Sabbath-breaker, or the disobedient to parents.

The law of toleration commends itself to reasoning minds, when it is considered, that the human mind is fallible and various. Even if a man could be warranted in saying that he thought himself to be absolutely right, and his neighbor to be wrong, still he must remember that men's minds are differently constituted, that their intellectual vision extends not to the same depth and distance, and that, hence, upon almost every conceivable subject there arises, and must arise, differences of opinion even among those who give themselves to study and inquiry. The more we become acquainted with mankind, and exercise our sagacity in determining character, the more we shall observe its original diversities: and it was the idea of an ancient historian,* that there is a wider difference between the individuals of our kind, than what is discernible between creatures of a separate order: and a modern writer,† who knew human nature well, asserts, that the

* Plutarch. † Montaigne.

distance is much greater between man and man, than between man and beast. Surely, then, we must be prepared to expect great varieties of opinion necessarily to spring out of the differences of mind and disposition in the human race; and to acknowledge, that it would be as hard to subject the mind to one way of thought, as it was infamously cruel to adapt the body to the bed of Procrustes.

In physical and mathematical science the interference of authority has been found to be ridiculous, and men believe that the earth moves round beneath the sun although the Roman Catholic church would have had them believe, and Galileo teach otherwise. Why should we court its restraints in our inquiries after religious truth? Better have partial enthusiasm, schism, and fanaticism, three dreadful evils, than the more dreadful ones of stagnation, compulsion, and ultimate torpor or death. It is by dispassionate discussion, and by the comparison and collision of opinions, that error, however popular, will be discarded, and the truth be best brought to light; for wherever error is not exposed to the test of general examination, it may have an extensive and undisputed sway in secret, while the surest way of contracting its empire, is to grant facilities to the general power of investigating its character. On the other hand, let Truth ever stand forward without fear, concealment, or mystery, ready to challenge inquiry: and whatever can not be maintained by knowledge and reason should not be allowed to seek even a feeble protection from judicial severities. It must never be denied, but that every Christian ought to believe as the church of Christ believes, provided the church be true: but the question is, Which is that *true church?* And when that is answered, as a man may unlawfully execute a lawful sentence, so he may falsely believe as the true church believes: for if I believe what she believes, only because she believes it, and not because I am convinced in my understanding and conscience of the truth of what she believes, my faith is faltering, though hers be true: it is not intrinsically true to me, because I have no evidence of it: it is taken rather upon trust, and what is taken upon the trust of one, may soon be transferred upon the trust of another. In short, I

must believe as the true church believes, yet not because she so believes, but for the same reasons that she herself does so believe, because none can truly believe as she believes, but must do so upon the same principles and motives for which they believed that first made up that Christian church.* Once rob me of the liberty of my choice, the use of my understanding, the distinction of my judgment, and no religion comes amiss; indeed it leads to no religion. It was the saying of Charles the First to the then Prince of Wales, "Make the religion of your education the religion of your judgment;" which seems to be of the nature of an appeal from his education to his judgment about the truth of his religion: and we may depend upon it, that any portion of religion which is too tender to be examined, is unsound, and our holding it is contradictory to apostolic injunction, *Prove all things, hold fast that which is good.* St. Paul had no commission or power over conscience otherwise than reasoning and persuasion gave him; and how beautifully he wrote to the Corinthian Church, *Not for that we have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy* (2 Cor. i. 24); we are not persecutors: we use not, as Bishop Middleton observes on this text, the assumption of an arbitrary power, but rather, we are fellow-workers of your joy.

In the second place, What good is gained by persecution?

* It must be borne in mind, that persons of learning and leisure are here spoken of; and on these there rests a great responsibility, for they learn not only for themselves, but for others. Dr. Johnson said, "All intellectual improvement arises from leisure: all leisure arises from one working for another." He held truly, that if all were to work at manual labor, there would be no intellectual improvement.

It is certain, that a great proportion of the poor have no reason for their faith. They could not give one proof that the Scripture is the Word of God, except that they were told so when they were children. Indeed many educated persons hold, and act upon many articles of faith because they have been so taught, not because they have canvassed the arguments on both sides, and made a deliberate choice. The Rev. John Venn (of Hereford) has handled this matter soundly in his "Christian Ministry and Church Membership" (Hatchard), showing that life is not long enough for such discussions to the great bulk of mankind. Jeremy Taylor has some beautiful sentiments on this head, and speaks of being led by a small taper into an admirable and happy place. See *Liberty of Prophesying*, Sec. 11–13, generally; also his *Ductor Dubitantium*.

It produces no real change of opinion, but simply encourages the semblance of change. It tends to make men false and hypocritical; dangerous to the state, because it is a maxim worthy of Cæsar's notice, *never to think him true to Cæsar, that is false to his own conscience;* and it does harm to religion, by engaging men in its profession who will never adorn it by their practice. And to the Church of England, the most pure, learned, and apostolic church on the earth, it ought to be peculiarly abhorrent. If she practiced it, readily would it be said, not only by malevolent opponents, that she could not defend herself by the arguments of reason and truth, and the manifestation of her utility, seeing she called for the secular arm to put down her dissenting enemies. It would be an imitation, in different degree, of those men who bound themselves by a vow to kill St. Paul, because they could not answer his philosophy. It would be a humiliating confession that good-will opens not the way to men's hearts, and that those who are forced to belong to her are more worth having, than those who are incited purely by virtue and piety. Rather, would not the persecuted and persecutors be wretched neighbors one to the other? The Indian Atabalipa rejected the Romish baptism because of the Spanish tyranny, whence it was usual with those poor Americans to desire that they might not go to heaven if the Spaniards went there, not heeding that there *the wicked cease from troubling*. No, the persecuted and the persecutors can only be friends in the sense of that case of the poor negro slave who was overheard praying for the conversion of his cruel master. It was stated by a writer,* who knew well the feelings of the public mind, of the Act of Toleration which passed in the first year of William and Mary, "It is a known observation, that the dissenters are brought into the methods of life in common with the best and most polite people, *and crowds of the generations which have grown up under the toleration have conformed to the church,* FROM THE HUMANITY OF THAT LAW. The fathers of families have, perhaps, found some pain in retracting their errors, and in going into new communities and

* Sir Richard Steele.

conversations, but *we see thousands connive at the conformity of their children;* the parents have been secretly pleased at their sliding into that economy, for which the fear of the imputation of self-interest, or apostasy, prevented them in their persons to declare." And the same change is apparent now. The repeal of the Corporation and Test Acts in the year 1828 has served to strengthen the church, and never was the Church of England so esteemed as at the present time; showing, that free toleration of all religious sects is to her advantage, and that it is soundness and earnestness that in the long run prevail in the minds of the calm and rational majority of the nation. Lord Brougham, a man who would not endure an atom of religious persecution, has lately said,* "He had often confessed, that of all churches of which he had any knowledge, the English church was the most kind, the most peaceable, and the most tolerant, and even dissenters cheerfully confessed that she possessed all these attributes."

Those Toleration Acts have given to the church a firmer basis of popular confidence than ever she before enjoyed, on a principle above suggested; they are the safety valve, on the same principle, against national explosions. Let her ever act on such views; and while she may think it necessary not to abolish all tests and subscriptions for union with herself, let her remember that these ought to be made, as Paley has laid down, as simple and easy as possible, always adapting themselves, in matters of unessential teaching, to altered circumstances; and in regard to the admission, without distinction, of all good and competent Christian men to civil privileges and emoluments, she should never more offer any opposition, but rather rejoice, for her own sake, that the day of *complete* toleration, as spoken of by Archdeacon Paley, has ultimately arrived. And behold, in the words of the renowned Bishop Horsley, how consistent is attachment to the church with the toleration of others; for thus the best of churchmen will ever speak: "Fixed, my lords, as I am in the persuasion that religion is the only solid foundation of civil society, and by consequence that an *establishment of*

* House of Lords, May 22, 1849.

*religion* is an essential branch of every well constructed polity, I am equally fixed in another principle, that it is a duty which the great law of Christian charity imposes on the Christian Magistrate, *to tolerate Christians of every denomination separated from the established church by conscientious scruples*, with the exception of such sects only, if any such sects there be, which hold principles, so subversive of civil government in general, or so hostile to the particular constitution under which they live, as to render the extermination of such sects an object of just policy."* Happy the churchman, or rather, happy the man, be he churchman or dissenter, who strives to emulate the liberal and undaunted, yet ever judicious and devout spirit of Bishop Horsley!

Let it not be thought that any attempt is here made to set a lesser value on the doctrines of the church of Christ, than on the laws of the land. It is especially commanded that the civil rulers shall not bear the sword in vain for the punishment of evil doers, but no such command in reference to the holding of Christian doctrine is given. A heretic is to be rejected, expelled, without pains or penalties, from the ecclesiastical body; and that is all. The church is to show nothing but mercy: and while the state punishes its political schismatics with fine, and imprisonment, and transportation, and death, the church is only to proceed to the painful duty of excommunication for the benefit of the orthodox body, and with the hope that the offending one may be led to reflect on the article of belief that has caused his separate position, and, it may be, on further investigation, to acknowledge that he has strayed from the truth.

It must be remembered, that all disputes and divisions are to be lamented deeply, however proper and necessary it may be, for reasons above given, to tolerate them in their free expression and act. Without unity of doctrine or government, without even so much of consent to the more essential points

* Speech on the Second Reading of the Bill for the Relief of Roman Catholics, under certain conditions, May 31, 1791. The latter part of this sentence agrees with what Paley more fully lays down as the second case of exclusion by test laws. See Moral Philosophy, vol. ii. p. 341, 20th. edit. 1814.

of Catholic truth as shall associate men in an unity of action,* while it permits in them a liberty of reserve as to other matters not of vital importance, it is not to be hoped that the church can either bring the baptized, in one holy fellowship, to the stature of the fullness of Christ, or fulfill the noble witness which was committed to her, in her corporate capacity, to bear to the world. And this conviction is the one which resistlessly presents itself to the mind, and most distresses the heart of any Christian man taking an enlarged view of the present condition of Christ's church upon the earth.

This consideration should lead men to be very careful in their reasons for separating from their brethren, whether it be from their brethren of the Established Church, or from their brethren who have formed themselves into a different establishment. "Schism," writes the Hon. Baptist Noel, "is division among the disciples of Christ, who, as one flock, one brotherhood, one body, ought to be united; and those who cause this division are schismatics." Let us accept this definition of schism, uniting it with that of a worthier authority,† who defines schism to be the "forsaking external communion purely and orderly established in the church:" and let us allow, that there may be two parties in the encouragement of schism, those who require assent to matters unscriptural or inexpedient, and those who too readily dissent from a communion which is purely and orderly established. The former, in the words of Paley, have already been warned: with the latter we have now to do, with those who too hastily quarrel with institutions, and, liking to show their independence, rather follow after licentiousness of will than liberty of investigation: men who are slaves to passion and novelty, and thus prefer the changes of any of the invented sects rather than the primitive truths of the inherited church.

Few men are intellectual and conscientious in their dissent, but wherever these are to be found, we must respect them. Dissenting leaders are constantly rebuking those of their followers who come not after them upon any conviction of mind as a matter of conscience, but merely from very inferior

* Church of England Review. † Hooker.

motives.* Still whatever be the motive, they should practice toleration toward others, as they would wish it to be observed toward themselves. Yet we find too many who are extremely sensitive in this respect themselves, lamentably regardless of it toward those who differ from them. "Toleration," says the Rev. Sydney Smith,† "is a great good, and a good to be imitated, let it come from whom it will. If a skeptic is tolerant, it only shows that he is not foolish in practice as well as erroneous in theory. If a religious man is tolerant, it evinces that he is religious from thought and inquiry, because he exhibits in his conduct one of the most beautiful and important consequences of a religious mind, an inviolable charity to all the honest varieties of human opinion." Dr. Arnold tells us of the "narrow spirit in things religious" which showed itself in the conscientious Puritans: and he noticed another kind of abuse of religious liberty, and says, "To speak of liberty, when we mean the liberty to be irreligious; or of freedom of conscience, when our only conscience is our convenience, is no other than a mockery and a profanation."‡ The quaint Fuller, alluding to the intolerance and unreasonableness of the Puritan party, speaks of them as "those who, desiring most ease and liberty for their own sides when bound with episcopacy, now gird their own garment the closest about the consciences of others."

What are we to think of those who fled from episcopal authority to New England, there to exercise the most dreadful kinds of persecution? The coercive power of the magistrate was every thing, and those who ventured to oppose it were cruelly put down by their puritanical brethren. By that natural tendency of the human heart, says the historian § of this period, from the love of independence to that of tyranny, they changed their opinions as they changed the climate; and only seemed to arrogate freedom of thought to themselves in order to deny it to others. This system was supported by the

* "Intellectus humanus," says Lord Bacon, "luminis sicci non est; sed recipit infusionem a voluntate et affectibus."—*Novum Organum*, lib. i.

† Letters on the subject of Catholics, p. 119.

‡ Lectures on Modern History, Lect. 6, p. 237.

§ Abbé Raynal, vol. i. p. 109.

severities of the law, which attempted to put a stop to every difference in opinion, *by imposing capital punishment on all who dissented!* Whoever was either convicted, or even suspected, of entertaining sentiments of toleration, was exposed to such cruel oppressions, that they were forced to fly from their first asylum, and seek refuge in another. The Quakers suffered severely from these dissenters, and the persecution was at last suppressed only by the intervention of the mother country!

What are we to think of the Anabaptists, who, after they had carried fire and sword into a great part of Germany, under the idea of inspiration, at last thought themselves inspired to compose a religious code, of which the following was the first Article: "In the mixed system of intolerance and mildness by which they are guided, the Anabaptist church, being *the only one in which the pure word of God is taught, neither can nor ought to communicate with any other!*"* A portion of another article was, that the "baptism of infants is an invention of the devil and of the Pope!" forgetting that it was universally practiced before any Pope had ever existed.

What are we to think of the intolerance (truly and strictly such) of the Solemn League and Covenant, which every Presbyterian teacher in Scotland is bound to sign "each one

*. An old Burgher minister at Dalkeith preached against Wesley, affirming that if he died in his present sentiments he would be damned; and the fanatic declared that he would stake his own salvation upon it. "The seceders," says Wesley, "Who have fallen in my way, are more uncharitable than the Papists themselves. I never yet met a Papist who *avowed* the principle of murdering heretics. But a seceding minister being asked, 'Would not you, if it was in your power, cut the throats of all the Methodists?' replied directly, 'Why, did not Samuel hew Agag in pieces before the Lord?' I have not yet met a Papist in this kingdom who would tell me to my face, all but themselves must be damned; but I have seen seceders enough who make no scruple to affirm, *none but themselves could be saved!*"—Southey's *Life of Wesley*, vol. ii. p. 384.

In a work by a very able man (H. M. Elliot, Esq.), entitled *Bibliographical Index to the Historians of Muhammedan India*, we have a strong instance of intolerance and bigotry in the person of Abdu-l-Kadir, who wrote a general History of India down to the fortieth year of the reign of the Emperor Aleban (Delhi), who was contemporary with our Queen Elizabeth. It is curious to see how he imagines every evil of the king's two ministers because they tolerated the religious ceremonies of the Hindus and Guebres.

of them for himself," and "*with their hands lifted up to the Most High God, to swear!*" See in the second belligerent article, how they vow to *extirpate* whole churches opposed to their views and their forms of church government. In short, they make intolerance an article of their religious creed and action; they sanctify their tongues and right arms with it; they will not admit the exercise of toleration. This is very dreadful, and while we mourn over the excesses of a Chreighton, or a Claverhouse, we can not but acknowledge their temper and spirit of persecution to be verily incarnated in the Presbyterian body.* A Locke, a Grotius, an Arnold, could not take these oaths: the very idea would cause, as it were, a revulsion of the heart's blood in such men. What a free and noble system of religious liberty did our great philosopher form for Carolina: and blessed will be the time when the Grotian theory of union, indorsed by Arnold, shall be accepted willingly in the Christian church: and all your Solemn Leagues and Covenants, Westminster Confessions, Directories, &c., banished from men's lips and hearts for ever.

For after all, it is not systems and creeds that make men tolerant, and merciful, and kind, but the inward heart of Christian love. "Good temper," exclaimed a bishop, "is three-fourths of Christianity." How beautifully Hooker said, "I take no joy in striving, I have not been trained up in it:" and he prays, that "no strife may ever be heard of again, but this, who shall hate strife most, also shall pursue peace and unity with swiftest paces." Jeremy Taylor saith well and kindly, "That a thing is not true, is not argument sufficient to conclude, that he that believes it true is not to be endured;" that is, we ought to have no personal hatreds. And John Smith, of Cambridge, hits off the true Christian conduct, when he says, "There is a knowing of the truth as it is in Jesus, as it is in a Christ-like nature, as it is in that sweet, mild, humble, and loving spirit of Jesus, which spreads itself like a morning sun upon the souls of good men, full of light and life." It was a wise saying of Lord Coke, the renowned lawyer, "Whatever grief a man hath, ill words

* To enter fully into Scottish persecution, see Bramhall's Works, vol. iii. p. 241, &c.

work no good, and learned counsel never use them." And the good, and learned Robert Boyle,* had possessed himself with such an amiable view of religion, that he liked no narrow thoughts, or superstitious practices, or sourness of parties, nor any nicety that occasioned divisions among Christians.

In reading the above observations, let the distinction between indifference and the genuine spirit of toleration be carefully marked. Some persons may be tolerant because, like Gallio, they care for none of these things; they have little regard for any religion, and do not wish to know what is the truth, or what parties are best established in the truth. It is no credit to such persons to be tolerant; their tolerance springs out of indifference or indolence, or want of spiritual discernment. But other men cherish strong apprehensions of the truth, or of what they consider to be truth: they would not resign it but with their lives, and would have all men to believe as they themselves believe; thinking that their doctrine and their church is founded on the primitive custom and creed, and not to be set aside by every new-fangledness, and extemporal lightness, or conceit of their more changeable fellow-creatures. Now when these men stand fast to their own views and principles, setting an exceeding intrinsical value on them, and yet give full liberty to others whose later novelties they condemn, then toleration, in the virtue of its highest principle, is exercised; and the generosity and kindness of their Christianity is nobly manifested to the world. For toleration is like the virtue of forgiveness of injuries; the deeper the injury the grander the forgiveness. Toleration does not imply compliance or compromise, but the temper with which we bear other persons' views and dispositions. So saith the pious Hannah More, "Oh, how I hate faction, division, and controversy in religion! And yet if people will advance dangerous absurdities till they become popular, truth must not be left to shift for herself." But of the alienation of heart among Christian people, perhaps John Newton† speaks best. He wants to know, how it is that members of

* See the Appendix to the Life of Lord Orrery, by Eustace Budgell, Esq. 2d. edit 1734.

† Letter to Hannah More, vol. iii. p. 19, of her Memoirs.

the same body, partakers of the same grace, are often so shy and suspicious of one another: so inconsistent with themselves and their principles? And he gives as a reason, the painful fact, that they are still encumbered with a remnant of pride, prejudice, and self-will. Satan has a magic glass, and there are certain magical words, most of which owe their influence, if not their origin to him. The believer, when he looks at a brother Christian, as he would hope he is, "sees a Calvinist, or an Arminian, a High Churchman, a Sectary, a Methodist, &c. One of these names, perhaps, he prides himself in avowing, and therefore allows that those who bear it must be infallibly right: the others he dislikes, and therefore takes it for granted that those who bear them must be wrong: and though he would hope the best, he is not desirous of actual communion with such perverse, mistaken people. And yet, perhaps, some of them are much more spiritual, humble, and exemplary than himself. But he sees them through the medium of party prejudice," &c.

The above is too true a picture of the religious world, by one who knew it well. True toleration would at once dissipate all this kind of narrow, denominational feeling. Let not the word and name of toleration be despised, especially by those who can not rise to its smallest exercise. Happy the time when toleration is swallowed up in union! Meanwhile, since differing creeds and parties must yet be presented before the eyes of the inhabitants of the world,

> "Let them see,
> That as more pure and gentle is your faith,
> Yourselves are gentler, purer." *

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* Robert Southey.

## CHAPTER XV.

### MORE OPINIONS ON, AND TREATMENT OF DISSENTERS.

It will be perceived that the desire of toleration just offered exceeds that of Dr. Johnson; and yet while he could not tolerate certain doctrines, forms of church government, and modes of proceedings among dissenters, he ever tolerated their persons, so long as ignorance or moral misbehavior did not drive him him to refuse companionship.

One anecdote will especially show us Dr. Johnson's predominant feeling in regard to the Church of England, namely, of its superiority. Dr. Robertson, the historian, who was very companionable, once said, "Dr. Johnson, allow me to say that in one respect I have the advantage of you: when you were in Scotland you would not come to hear any of our preachers, whereas, when I am here I attend your public worship without scruple, and indeed with great satisfaction." Johnson answered, "Why sir, that is not so extraordinary: the king of Siam sent embassadors to Louis the Fourteenth, but Louis the Fourteenth sent none to the king of Siam," There is an historical mistake here, but we can not mistake Johnson's meaning. However, he liked to converse with Robertson, though he could not suffer his religious views.

Boswell had hired a servant in London who was a Roman Catholic. He asked Johnson whether this should prevent his taking him to Scotland. "Why, no, sir," replied Johnson, "if *he* has no objection, you can have none." This led to a brief conversation, in which he expressed his dislike of the Presbyterian religion; and on Boswell asking his reason, he said, "Why, sir, the Presbyterians have no church, no apostolical ordination." "And do you think that absolutely essential, sir?" asked Boswell. "Why, sir," answered Johnson, "as it was an apostolical institution, I think it is

dangerous to be without it. And, sir, the Presbyterians have no public worship: they have no form of prayer in which they know they are to join. They go to hear a man pray, and are to judge whether they will join with him." What pith and marrow in this observation!

We may be surprised that Boswell did not stand up more for his views. The Presbyterians, of course, think they have a church, and apostolical ordination.* Johnson would have taken up a stronger position on their want of succession. The one, however, is involved in the other, and he would soon have come to it. Certainly he states a strong reason, in these days of many opinions, against extemporaneous prayer in a public congregation. To him this must have been insurmountable. Let us only imagine his awful manner of composing himself for prayer: his love for devoutness, and for holy and reverent expressions, without passion and without exaggeration: feeling himself in the very presence of the Jehovah, with that Jehovah's eye upon his heart; fearful, before all things, lest a flippant or presumptuous word escape his lips: just see him on his knees with his awful countenance and humbled heart, and then consider with what horror he would hear the fluent and familiar language which too often pervades prayer—prayer which should ever be most chastened, most solemn in its every word. To any man the confusion must be great, when he prepares himself for prayer and can not join in the petitions; and yet how often must

* The Presbyterians and Congregationalists have yet to go to Scripture, and examine it carefully, in regard to matters of church formation and discipline. Dr. Wardlaw takes one view, and Dr. Davidson another. The latter, however, seems to think that the precedents and precepts of apostolic men are not binding on future times; that churches in the present day "may make *new regulations, and change apostolic practices*" (p. 24); and the former denies that the decree of the Council at Jerusalem was inspired! Dr. Campbell, in Lectures on Ecclesiastical History, Lect. 4, p. 81, says, "In regard to those politics which *obtain at present* in the different Christian sects, I own ingenuously, that I have not found one, of all that I have examined, which can be said perfectly to coincide with *the model of the apostolic church*." See an able article in the *British Quarterly Review* for May, 1848. Also a review of the Duke of Argyle's work, "Presbytery Examined," in the *North British Review*, No. 20, p. 445, &c.

this be the case with the better-informed and more devout minds! Hence we find that the meetings of the British and Foreign Bible Society are rarely opened with prayer: and though persons meet to circulate that Book which commands prayer, yet they can not practice its injunctions for fear of offending one another. The Bible authority for the use of a liturgy is great; and certainly there is this advantage, that we know beforehand what we shall pray for, and it is open to us either to comply or to keep away.

Boswell attempted to propitiate Johnson by saying, "But, sir, their doctrine is the same with that of the Church of England. Their Confession of Faith, and the Thirty-nine Articles, contain the same points, even the doctrine of predestination." "Why, yes, sir," said Johnson, "predestination was a part of the clamor of the times, so it is mentioned in our articles, but with as little positiveness as could be." It makes a difference, certainly, whether decided prominence be given to a doctrine, or whether it be barely admitted: but we must recollect that there are two kinds of predestination, absolute and conditional, contended for, and the Church of England would only support the latter; and her positiveness, not little, for her article is a grand one, would lie all on that side. Boswell should have thought, that when dissenters speak of their slight differences, and plead for sameness with the church in all essentials, it may very properly be asked them, Why they dissent at all? why break through the bonds of fellowship, and cover the earth with divisions, when they acknowledge that the causes are unessential? Strictly speaking, we should not, perhaps, call the members of the Scotch Kirk, dissenters. They never separated from *us:* they, as a National Church, are independent of *us*, though schismatics as regards the Church Catholic.

Dr. Johnson's plain straightforward manner in talking with Boswell and other Presbyterians, may put us in some degree in mind of Lord Thurlow's way. A body of Presbyterians once made an application to his lordship to assist in repealing certain statutes which disqualified them from holding civil offices. He received the deputation with great civility, but, in his own blunt manner, replied, "Why, gentle-

men, if your old, sour religion had been the Establishment, I might have complied: but as it is not, you can not expect me to accede to your request." They retired smiling, says Lord Campbell;* and probably less dissatisfied than if he had tried to reason them into a conviction of the justice of the Test and Corporation Acts. They knew the manner of this powerful judge, and respected its sincereness.

Boswell must have been inclined in great degree to the Church of England. Johnson said to him, "Sir, the holy days observed by our church are of great use in religion." And the Presbyterian allows that there can be no doubt of this, if the number be not too extensive. He recommends Nelson's "Festivals and Fasts," as a most valuable help to devotion, and states that it has met with the greatest sale of any book ever printed in England, except the Bible: also he highly commends two sermons on this subject by Archdeacon Pott. And then he expresses himself in this remarkable way: "I am sorry to have it to say, that Scotland is the only Christian country, Catholic or Protestant, where the great events of our religion are not solemnly commemorated by its ecclesiastical Establishment, on days set apart for the purpose."

We have now got well rid of the Roman Catholic calendar of saints' days; we care neither for the ordinance of Bishop Niger, or the provincial constitution of Archbishop Islip; the bulls of Popes have passed away, and we of the Church of England, only keep days in celebration of the saints of the New Testament, and festivals in honor of great facts connected with our Lord's sojourn and ministry on the earth. These are all days of useful instruction, and the antiquity of this sacred custom commends it. It ought to be esteemed a high privilege to steal away from the cares and business of life, and from the boisterous ones of the world, to hear, from the Scripture and from discourses on the lives of the saints, in the sanctuary, of those who have already chanted forth, in triumphal strain, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" Surely much spiritual knowledge and refreshment may be thus gained, and the little knot of persons who may assemble in parish churches on the week

* Lives of the Lord Chancellors, vol. v. p. 662.

day seem best to be those "who going through the vale of misery use it for a well."*

Not only had the Presbyterian church of Scotland, in Dr. Johnson's opinion, no apostolic ordination, liturgy, and, as Boswell says, no observance of holy days, but the doctor insisted also that there were no theological works of merit written by any of its ministers; and his remark was not satisfactorily contradicted.

Nothing could induce him to enter a Presbyterian church. He could dine with the minister and be very friendly: he would even call the new road to the church which Boswell's father had made, by the name of the Via Sacra, but he would not enter its sacred portals. Boswell gives this note of Nov. 7, 1773: "My father and I went to public worship in our parish church, in which I regretted that Dr. Johnson would not join us: for though we have there no form of prayer, nor magnificent solemnity, yet, as God is worshiped in spirit and in truth, *and the same doctrine is preached as in the Church of England*, my friend would certainly have shown more liberality, had he attended. I doubt not, however, but he employed his time in private to very good purpose. His uniform and fervent piety was manifested on many occasions during our tour, which I have not mentioned."

Before this, he had refused to go and hear Principal Robertson preach. We have his reason: "I will hear him," said he, "if he will get up into a tree and preach; but I will not give a sanction, by my presence, to a Presbyterian assembly."

He was staying at a Presbyterian's house, where it was thought he might not like to join in family prayer. The host would have omitted prayer altogether, but on his scrupulosity being mentioned to Johnson, the latter said he had no objection to hear the prayer. Mr. Grant having prayed, Dr. Johnson said his prayer was a very good one, but objected to his not having introduced the Lord's Prayer. Johnson says, in his *Journey*, of this omission generally: "The most learned of the Scottish doctors would now gladly admit a

* Psalm lxxxiv. 6.

form of prayer, if the people would endure it. The zeal or rage of congregations has its different degrees. *In some parishes the Lord's Prayer is suffered!* in others it is still rejected as a form, and he that should make it part of his supplication, would be suspected of heretical pravity!"

How different is this custom to that of the Church of England! for she will have no Service of Prayers without including the Lord's Prayer; and hence, since three Services have been thrown into one, this holy prayer *may seem* to occur too often: and yet, which of the Services could we deprive of it?

Why the Presbyterians of Scotland should often entirely reject its use, is extraordinary. For in their own Directory for worship it is not only recommended as a pattern for prayer, but *allowed to be used as a form.* And the same assembly of divines who made that Directory, in their annotations upon the Lord's Prayer, say the same; so that from the avowed principles of the Presbyterians, the Lord's Prayer may be used in their prayers.

And as regards the use of forms of prayer, it is clear that such were used by the Jews, and by the Christians, both before and after immediate inspiration ceased. In the Book of Deuteronomy, there is a set form of blessing, of confession, and of prayer. Moses prayed by a form (Numb. x. 35); and David's Psalms are so many stated forms of prayers and praises by alternate response of priest and people, much in our own liturgical form. Our Lord frequented the Jewish worship, and he sanctioned a form of prayer. During the first five centuries of the Christian church, we find several Liturgies composed.

Not only our own Reformers retained and loved a Liturgy, but the foreign Reformers also countenanced such a form. Thus Luther made a Liturgy for the Church of Wittenberg; and all the Lutheran churches have a stated, prescribed form, which they constantly use.

Calvin composed a Liturgy, which was used in Geneva, and (where they could do it) in France; and that he ap-

proved of Liturgies is plain from a letter he wrote to the Protector of England.*

But what is most to the purpose, John Knox also composed a Liturgy. He, who "dreaded one mass more than ten thousand armed men;" he, whose intellect and flow of language, we may suppose, never failed him; he still thought the use of a Liturgy advisable; and more than one eminent divine of the Scottish church, in this day, have expressed earnest desire for a liturgical form of prayer; and certainly a greater earnest of union and stability can hardly be conceived. We may reasonably say, that it is the Liturgy of the Church of England, far more than her articles, or canons, or homilies, all put together, that has kept her so united, and so strong. Besides this, when we consider what the extemporaneous effusions of many men must be, it is an awful thing to call the Holy Ghost the patron of all their diverse prayers: while a prayer well considered, often written, often corrected, beneath the sought aid of the Holy Spirit, is more likely to be in accordance with the word and will of God. Strange that men who suppose the Holy Spirit to direct all their prayers, should never depend on the Holy Spirit for a psalm or a hymn, or for an extemporaneous tune, but in this case always seek what is written, and trust to the efforts of learning and memory. Surely, a little consideration on this fact, and its legitimate inference, ought to open their eyes, and bid them know that there are such qualities largely inherent in the human mind as self-delusion and self-presumption.

Dr. Johnson felt strongly on the subjects of religion and the church, and, as we have said before, we must make allowance for exclusive adhesion to what a man so firmly believes to be the truth, and regard any sentiments of toleration in such a one to be of far more value than if proceeding from the minds of the careless and the indifferent. He must have looked upon the Scottish Presbyterian church as one begotten and cradled in murder and blood, not, like his own, reared on the deaths of its own martyrs; to him it must have been politically abhorrent, not only as so inveterate

* See Calvin, Ep. 87, ad Protect. Angl.

against the Stuart race, but as, by its democratic form of ecclesiastical institutions, countenancing a like form of civil government; and religiously he must have disliked it, because he would think there could not be the spirit of devoutness, and the form of sound words, either in desk or pulpit, to which he would have been accustomed in the English church; and never, as we may see, did he go into the presence-chamber without due feelings of reverence and devotion. We may be very certain that no spirit of mean pride, or rivalry, or paltry exclusiveness actuated him, but that he refused because his conscience told him it was simply, yet sternly, his duty to do so.

With more cordiality we can support him in refusing to go to a kind of religious Robin-Hood Society in London, to hear a discussion by lawyers' clerks, petty tradesmen, and low mechanics, on the mysterious text of Matt. xxvii. 52, 53. Mrs. Hall said, it was a very curious subject, and she should like to hear it discussed. Johnson replied, warmly, "One would not go to such a place to hear it; one would not be seen in such a place, to give countenance to such a meeting." "But, sir," said she, with all the eager curiosity of a woman, "I should like to hear *you* discuss it." But he seemed reluctant to engage in it. This was the reverential feature of his character. But great men do not flippantly talk on all subjects, on all occasions, at all times. It was once said, We see such men as the late Earl of Orrery, the late Earl of Shaftesbury, the late Mr. Addison, Mr. Prior, and Mr. Mainwaring sit silent, while ——, and ——, and ——, and ——, hold forth upon every subject that falls under debate.

We may be more confirmed in our belief, that Dr. Johnson most conscientiously abstained from entering a Presbyterian church* (and recollect, the pious Hannah More, though much tempted, never entered a dissenting chapel in the whole course of her life),† when we view his conduct toward Presbyterian ministers individually. Boswell says:

* He also never entered a non-juring meeting-house, though his feelings were with the non-jurors.

† Memoirs, vol. iii. p. 125.

"Dr. Johnson, though he held notions far distant from those of the Presbyterian clergy, yet could associate on good terms with them. He indeed occasionally attacked them. One of them discovered a narrowness of information concerning the dignitaries of the Church of England, among whom may be found men of the greatest learning, virtue, and piety, and of a truly apostolic character. He talked before Dr. Johnson of fat bishops and drowsy deans, and, in short, seemed to believe the illiberal and profane scoffings of professed satirists or vulgar railers. Dr. Johnson was so highly offended, that he said to him, 'Sir, you know no more of our church than a Hottentot.'" Boswell adds, "I was sorry that he brought this upon himself."

The question was once started, how far people who disagree in a capital point can live in friendship together. Johnson said they might, while Goldsmith held they could not. The former cited the instance of himself and Burke, stating that the subject on which persons disagree must be shunned. "I can live very well with Burke," he said; "I love his knowledge, his genius, his diffusion and affluence of conversation; but I would not talk to him of the Rockingham party." Goldsmith insisted that the shunned subject would be the very one that people would have the greatest eagerness and curiosity to enter upon; as when Bluebeard says, "You may look into all the chambers but one," we should have the greatest inclination to look into that chamber. "Sir," replied Johnson, loudly, "I am not saying that *you* could live in friendship with a man from whom you differ as to some point; I am only saying that *I* could do it."

Yes, *he* could do it; though if the adverse opinion were urged, he could be angry with the man. "Every man," he said at another time, "who attacks my belief" in Christianity, "diminishes in some degree my confidence in it, and therefore makes me uneasy; and I am angry with him who makes me uneasy." And again: "Every man will dispute with great good humor upon a subject in which he is not interested." And so Gallio cared for none of these things; the disputes about a religion in which he did not himself believe were of no concern to him; and such was the Roman's pol-

icy under the circumstances. But with Johnson, even in these Presbyterian cases, a certain degree of sacrifice was to be made.

In another place, we are told, "Though Johnson loved a Presbyterian the least of all, this did not prevent his having a long and uninterrupted connection with the Rev. Dr. James Fordyce, who, since his death, hath gratefully celebrated him in a warm strain of devotional composition."

The celebrated Dr. Blair, whose sermons are so well known for their stern moral sentiments, was introduced to him by Dr. Fordyce. Of him he once said, "I read yesterday Dr. Blair's sermon on devotion, from the text, 'Cornelius, a devout man.' His doctrine is the best limited, the best expressed; there is the most warmth without fanaticism, the most rational transport. There is one part of it which I disapprove, and I'd have him correct it; which is, 'that he who does not feel joy in religion is far from the kingdom of heaven!' There are many good men whose fear of God predominates over their love. It may discourage. It was rashly said. *A noble sermon it is indeed. I wish Blair would come over to the Church of England.*"

A good wish this, and proving the sincerity of his love for the Church of England; for all who really love her will ever desire to see all excellence thriving within her pale, all that is corrupt and sluggish cast out. Dr. Johnson's remark about fear predominating over love in many minds, is good, because, though we are told that "perfect love casteth out fear," there is an allusion here only to slavish fear, a terror of God, rather than that proper and reverential fear which an Apostle commands, and which is to be cherished to the end of our lives. We are not required to feel the same kind of familiar love toward God which we entertain toward human friends; and Croker well observes, in a short comment on this passage in Blair's sermon, that "the love of God and the love of one's wife or friend are certainly not the same passion." Lucas states, in a more grave manner, although Croker's remark is just, that our love of God is not merely an honorable opinion of him, but a passion or affection: "the Scripture," he says, "expresses this love by *delight and joy, by desire and long-*

*ing*, *hungering*, *thirsting*, *seeking*, and the like. If we love God above all things, our hearts will be where our treasure is; our affections will be fastened on things above; and our conversation will be in heaven, because our God is there:" yet, in order to prevent persons from being too much cast down because they lack a high degree of ardor, he continues: "God is a being infinitely above our conceptions, and that of him which we do conceive, as power, wisdom, and goodness, though amiable, yet are spiritual, and not the objects of sense, and therefore do not move us with the same violence that sensible things do; whence it is easy to conclude, that our love of God is of a different nature from *that* we pay the creature; 'tis a more spiritual affection mixed with adoration; 'tis an awful desire of pleasing and enjoying him, not always terminating in so vehement and *sensible* a passion as visible objects beget in us; and therefore the safest way is to judge of our state, not by *transports*, but by the *firmness* of our *resolutions*, and by the *constancy* and *cheerfulness* of our *obedience*."* The italics are his own marks of the stress he desired to place upon these words. Sir Walter Scott sadly confounds the different meanings which may be given to the same term, when he commences some beautiful lines with the words,

"In peace love tunes the shepherd's reed," &c.

and gives this conclusion,

"For love is heaven, and heaven is love."

Blair's sermons are not read in the present generation so much as their value entitles them to be. There are two very expressive ones, on the texts, "All this availeth me nothing, so long as I see Mordecai the Jew sitting at the king's gate;" and, "Thine own friend, and thy father's friend, forsake not."

Abernethy and Gibbons were dissenting divines whose works Dr. Johnson perused. Of the latter, he says, "I took to Dr. Gibbons," And again, he said to Mr. Charles Dilly, "I shall be glad to see him. Tell him, if he'd call on me, and dawdle over a dish of tea in an afternoon, I shall take it kind." Of

* Lucas's Practical Christianity, chap. v. p. 88, 89.

Baxter and many other of the elder non-conformists we know that he thought highly, but approving of their piety when grave, more than admiring their learning; for in his mind the bishops and clergy were most profound in knowledge, scriptural, or classical; and certainly it would have been a shame to them if they did not excel, for they have more materials within their reach, and deeper sources from which to inform and embellish their minds, than the many who are not united with the universities and public libraries can possibly have. His distinction of the different degrees of attainment of learning was thus marked upon two occasions. Of Queen Elizabeth he said, "She had learning enough to have given dignity to a bishop;" and of Mr. Thomas Davies he said, "Sir, Davies has learning enough to give credit to a clergyman."

Whitfield, when in Scotland, notes that one of the ministers of the Associate Presbytery preached upon the text, "Watchman, what of the night?" &c. "I attended," says Whitfield; "but the good man so spent himself, in the former part of his sermon, in talking against prelacy, the Common Prayer-book, the surplice, the rose in the hat, and such like externals, that when he came to the latter part of his text, to invite poor sinners to Jesus Christ, his breath was so gone, that he could scarce be heard."*

To one of his correspondents at this time, Whitfield replied, "I wish you would not trouble yourself or me in writing about the corruption of the Church of England. I believe there is no church perfect under heaven; but as God, by His providence, is pleased to send me forth simply to preach the Gospel to all, I think there is no need of casting myself out."

* Southey's Life of Wesley, vol. ii. p. 230.

## CHAPTER XVI.

### THE WESLEYAN METHODISTS.

Dr. Johnson evidently liked what he saw during scant opportunities of John Wesley. He said, "John Wesley's conversation is good, but he is never at leisure. He is always obliged to go at a certain hour. This is very disagreeable to a man who loves to fold his legs and have out his talk, as I do." Again he said, "He can talk well on any subject;" but thought he did not believe the ghost story on sufficient authority, and lamented that Wesley did not take more pains to inquire into the evidence for it. Johnson afterward gave Boswell a note of introduction to Wesley, "because" he says in the note itself, "I think it very much to be wished that worthy and religious men should be acquainted with each other." Boswell had thus an opportunity of conferring with Wesley on the matter of the appearance of the ghost at Newcastle-upon-Tyne, but the evidence did not satisfy him, although Wesley believed it.

Few men have had more accusers than Wesley, and few men engaged warmer friends. Let us pass by the abuse, and receive the character given of him by a high churchman, and his familiar friend. "My whole soul," says Alexander Knox, Wesley's "dear Allick," "rises against those vile allegations of ambition and vanity: above both of which my precious old friend soared, as much as the eagle above the glow-worm. Great minds are not vain; and his was a great mind, if any mind can be made great, by disinterested benevolence, spotless purity, and simple devotedness to that one Supreme Good, in whom with the united *αἰσθησις* of the philosopher and the saint, he saw, and loved, and adored, all that was infinitely amiable, true, sublime, and beatific."*

* How different is this to the ultra-evangelical's view of Wesley! Romaine, in a letter to Lady Huntingdon, says: "I pity Mr. John from my heart. His societies are in great confusion; and the point which

Again he writes, "In John Wesley's views of Christian perfection are combined, in substance, all the sublime morality of the Greek Fathers, the spirituality of the mystics, and the divine philosophy of our favorite Platonists. Macarius, Fénélon, Lucas and all their respectivec lasses, have been consulted and digested by him; and his ideas are, essentially, theirs;" and he especially praises him for having popularized these sublime lessons in his hymns.

But this was the doctrine which called up so many *religious* enemies against him. Knox, on reading the Life of Hey, says, "I then saw in a light which never before struck me, that the real motive with John Wesley was, the dread of Calvinist infection, then beginning to grow rife in churches. Before this consideration, with him every thing but moral evil fell flat." Here we have the clew to the raging controversies of 1772 and 1773, in which Toplady and Fletcher, Rowland Hill and others were so excitingly engaged. On the Calvinistic side appeared, "Farrago double distilled;" "An old Fox tarred and feathered;" "Pope John," &c.; "More work for John Wesley:" while on the Wesleyan part the title of "Devil-factors" was given to the Calvinists; "Satan's synagogue;" "Advocates for sin;" "Witnesses for the father of lies;" "Blasphemers;" "Satan-sent preachers;" "Devils, liars, fiends." Wesley himself thus summed up the doctrine of Mr. Toplady's pamphlet on Predestination: "The sum of this; one in twenty (suppose) of mankind are elected; nineteen in twenty are reprobated. The elect shall be saved, do what they will; the reprobate shall be damned, do what they can. Reader, believe this or be damned." With this view of Calvinism, Wesley might truly be horrified; but this, though it might become the legitimate fruit of the Lambeth Articles, is not the doctrine of Calvin himself. No man has suffered more from the misrepre-

brought them into the wildness of rant and madness is still insisted on as much as ever. I fear the end of this delusion. As the late alarming Providence has not had its proper effect, and *perfection* is still the cry, God will certainly give them up to some more dreadful thing. May their eyes be opened before it be too late!" Wesley himself complained of the bitter opposition of such men as Whitfield, Madan, Hawels, Berridge, &c.—*Lady Huntingdon's Memoirs*, vol. i. p. 329.

sentations of friends and followers than Calvin; and Wesley himself has been frequently placed in the same predicament.

This acrimonious controversy, discreditable to both parties, was suspended during a portion of the two following years, on account of the interest taken in the dispute between Great Britain and her colonies; both Wesley and Fletcher, with many other religious persons, being induced to write on political matters. Fletcher wrote so well, that it is reported, the Lord Chancellor desired to know if he wished any preferment in the church: and, as to Wesley, it was alleged that he wished to be made a bishop. But his "Calm Address to our American Colonies," though ineffectual, is as reasoning a production as it is deeply loyal. The only strange thing is to find such arguments proceeding from Wesley: not but that he was always loyal to the backbone; but it agrees not with his ecclesiastical doings. In the first paragraph put the word "Church" for "Charter," and apply it to "Methodists" instead of "Americans," and it will be seen what we mean. Again, "No province can confer provincial privileges on itself;" and "A corporation can no more assume to itself privileges which it had not before, than a man can, by his own act and deed, assume titles or dignities." Yet Wesley, when he pleased, could make a bishop, or desire to get himself made one, without lawful imposition of hands; thus acting for himself, and his own assumption of power, while he is blaming the Americans for not being completely obedient to the higher authority. "No governments under heaven," he says, "are so despotic as the Republican." Again, "Republics show no mercy;" and he concludes, "Let us put away our sins, the real ground of all our calamities: *which never will or can be thoroughly removed, till we fear God and honor the king.*"

Dr. Johnson, in writing a brief note to Wesley, took occasion to thank him for his American views. "I have thanks," he says, "likewise to return you for the addition of your important suffrage to my argument on the American question. To have gained such a mind as yours may justly confirm me in my own opinion." "In this little pamphlet," says Southey,*

* Life of Wesley, vol. ii. p. 421.

"he pursued the same chain of reasoning as Dr. Johnson had done, and maintained that the supreme power in England had a legal right of laying any tax upon them, for any end beneficial to the whole empire." Forty thousand copies of this "Calm Address" were printed in three weeks. A friend to the Methodists obtained possession of all the copies sent to New York, and destroyed them, foreseeing the imminent danger to which the preachers would be exposed, if a pamphlet so unpopular in its doctrines should get abroad. Boswell finds fault with Wesley for the course he took; and when Dr. Johnson had said, "Whitfield had a mixture of politics and ostentation, whereas Wesley thought of religion only;" he observes in a note, "That can not be said now, after the flagrant part which Mr. John Wesley took against our American brethren, when, in his own name, he threw among his enthusiastic flock the very individual combustibles of Dr. Johnson's 'Taxation no Tyranny;' and after the intolerant spirit which he manifested against our fellow Christians of the Roman Catholic communion, for which that able champion, Father O'Leary, has given him so hearty a drubbing." The American question was one out of *two* political matters only, on which Boswell differed from Johnson. Dr. Towers, a Unitarian minister, was a chief opponent of the doctor's views; while Mr. Orme, the able and eloquent historian of Hindostan, said: "Had I been George the Third, and thought as he did about America, I would have given Johnson three hundred a year for his 'Taxation no Tyranny,' alone." George the Third, always friendly to Wesley, must have been as glad, but in a more honest manner, of his alliance on this serious occasion, as King James was of the time-serving countenance of William Penn the Quaker; for both held sway over an inflammable portion of the people.

But while we allow a high personal character to Wesley, we can not give our approval to every item of his public career and conduct. Knox* could not do so, neither could

* Wilberforce writes to Mr. Stephen: "Alexander Knox is a man of great piety, uncommon reading (uncommon both in quality and quantity), and extraordinary liveliness of imagination and powers of conversation. He is really well worth your going over on purpose to

Johnson. The former truly loved him, and held him up as an instance, "how happily the most finished courtesy may be blended with the most perfect piety." And of his followers, he could write, "I have been much with Methodists these eight days past. There are most excellent persons among them: and, I will add, *the truest churchmen in the world.*" He states, however, that the majority of preachers have been bred dissenters, and are still too much so at heart; "but a good cause," the cause of the church, "is itself a counterpoise to number;" so he hopes the well-disposed part will carry it above the other. At a farther period, he states that the preachers are not losing ground in their adherence to the Established Church; that they attended the Cathedral service and sacraments at Armagh, and took back such a good account of the archbishop's sermon, that Dr. Coke sat down and wrote an apologetic letter to the primate, expressing his regret that his wife's indisposition had prevented his attendance, and declaring his attachment, and that of the Methodists, to the Establishment.

Again, after much "pleasant talk" with them, he says: "The Methodists, without any outward alteration that any one could discover but ourselves, might positively, in my judgment, become the most efficient friends of the Established Church, simply by being brought to breathe the same spirit with itself."

At another time we find him saying, "I wrote a pretty long letter on the question, 'Ought a member of the Church of England to forsake the Methodist society, through fear of being liable to the guilt of schism?' I was obliged to say, I think not. What new shape the Methodists may be acquiring, I will not pronounce. But judging by their character heretofore, though I must deem them irregular, I can not account them schismatical, because they do not yet exhibit *separate communion.* Considering them, therefore, as irregular, I would not advise any one to unite himself to their society: but not regarding them as schismatical, I would

talk with him. He was once, strange to say, Lord Castlereagh's private secretary. He is the very last man I should have conceived to have gravitated to Lord Castlereagh."

not advise any one, now in it, to forsake it. I mean, I would not do so, in ordinary circumstances, lest, in depriving a weak Christian of his go-cart, I might incapacitate him for going at all." He fears that symptoms are appearing of a new character, to which his reasoning would not apply.* But under any circumstances he thinks it best to defend the church rather by proofs of superior excellence, than by exclusion of privileges; and fully to maintain her cause, on grounds of good sense, without trenching on any feeling of charity. "Let the Methodists act as they may," he observes, "I should not deem it right to frighten weak women with menances of damnation."

He also says, when expressing friendly relations toward them, "I conceive Wesleyan Methodists, not dissenterized, are comparatively with all others, our next of kin." And yet, with every kind disposition toward them, he could not help discerning their inferiority. "No community," he writes, "needs more to be kept on safe ground, for they have miserably bad anchorage. They seem to think none like themselves: whereas no well-meaning religionists can have a worse defined theological creed than themselves." He dislikes "the animality of Methodism:" and he thinks that though they can awaken men to the elementary principles of religion, they can not conduct them on to maturity—they can lay the foundation, but not build thereon.

The fact is, that Wesley was a man raised up for a great

* It should be remembered, that Knox's remarks, as he himself elsewhere states, apply *only* to Irish Methodists; he knew nothing of English Methodism; and the latter certainly exhibits separate and schismatical communion. Unless this be stated, Knox's real sentiments may be misapprehended. Robert Hall, the eminent dissenter, states, however, of England, "Nothing was farther from the views of these excellent men (Whitfield and Wesley), than to innovate in the established religion of their country: their whole aim was to recall the people *to the good old way, and to imprint the doctrine of the Articles and Homilies on the spirits of men.*"—*Hall's Works*, vol. ii. p. 294. See Correspondence between Knox and Jebb, Letter 58, vol. i. p. 419, for an interesting conversation between Knox and a Methodist, on the Methodists having no idea what it was to leave first principles. See also Jones's Life of Bishop Horne, in Jones's Works, p. 145, vol. vi.; Wesley's excuse for making bishops consisting of the fear of the Anabaptists.

and signally useful purpose; and that purpose, under God, he nobly effected: but it is equally clear that his example was not to be a pattern for all times, neither was his system to be one of continuance. We can discern this, when we regard his own sayings and doings, and notice the schisms that have weakened, and are weakening Wesleyan Methodism.

For instance, when Wesley said "The world is my parish," he announced a magnificent career for himself, but not one that could be followed, or is followed, by Churchman or Wesleyan, afterward, without causing confusion. Wesleyan Methodism has its circuits and stations as regularly marked out, though not so permanently it may be, as the church owns its dioceses and parishes; and no Wesleyan minister can now cry out, any more than a clergyman, that "the world is his parish." The saying is obsolete. Although it suited Wesley's object, yet each man now is best located in his determined district: and what should we think of a farmer who left off the cultivation of his own allotted farm, and crying out, "The world is my farm," should set about urging and helping every body else? This is clearly one of the exploits of Wesley's career, which is not to be imitated: and, most probably, if not most certainly, in these vigorous days of the church, and with large populations to be attended to, Wesley himself would be the last man to make the exclamation again; for such places as Leeds, Manchester, Blackburn, &c., would be found by him to be "world" sufficient for a display of all his labor and all his zeal.

Next, in the case of Wesley making bishops, we see not only a present absurdity, and a contradiction to his own belief, but also an affair which can not be perpetuated. If Wesley had a right, a scriptural or ecclesiastical right, to make a bishop, then every clergyman of the church of England in priest's orders has the same right, and hence every clergyman can make a bishop of whomsoever he will. A clergyman in London very lately, the deposed Dr. Dillon, did actually make *himself* a bishop: the first instance, as it were, of a man's laying hands on his own head. Wesley made Coke a bishop,*

* The Works of Bishop Sherlock reclaimed Dr. Coke (the Wesleyan) from a philosophical kind of infidelity, and he entered into Holy Orders.

and yet Coke was equal with Wesley, so why could not Coke make bishops in America without being consecrated in solemn form, or letters of ordination, by Wesley? But let us only consider, that at once there would be an end of all order and decency if each clergyman could make a bishop, or any number of clergymen combine to make a bishop, antagonistic to the lawful bishop of their diocese. This consideration is enough, but we must recollect that there is a wrongness at the root of the matter: for the less is blessed of the greater, not the greater of the less;* and Wesley fully allowed that the "greater" did exist and wished Dr. Coke to perpetuate the threefold order in America.

Again, what are we to think of his obtaining ordination for his preachers from a Greek bishop, Erastus bishop of Arcadia in Crete, who, not knowing one word of English, performed the Service in Greek, in a tongue unknown to the ordained! He pressed the foreign bishop also to consecrate him, Mr. Wesley himself, that he might henceforth ordain whomsoever he would. When Wesley was charged with this, and also with having violated the oath of supremacy by thus acknowledging the power of a foreign prelate in these realms, Mr. Olivers, with Wesley's privity, wrote a pamphlet denying the validity of the latter charge, but justifying the former on the ground that the inward call of Mr. Wesley and his followers being manifest, they naturally desired the outward call also. Messrs. Jones and Staniforth were ordained by this Greek bishop; but, it is said, he felt unwillingness to consecrate Wesley a bishop, because the ceremony required the presence of two or three bishops, and these could not be procured. To crown all, the man was considered by many, especially by Mr. Toplady, Romaine, Madan, and others, to be an impostor; he tried to introduce himself to Lady Huntingdon,† a singular circumstance for an orthodox Eastern bishop, but her ladyship suspected that he was not altogether

He afterward sought to be made a bishop in the Church of England.—*Southey's Life of Wesley*, vol. ii. p. 401.

* See some excellent remarks in the works of Jones of Nayland, vol. vi. p. 147, in his Life of Bishop Horne.

† Lady Huntingdon's Memoirs, vol. i. p. 331.

what he appeared or pretended to be. We often find impostors bold up to a certain point, and then their heart fails them; and thus, in this instance, if this man were an impostor, he would think that while he might ordain inferior or obscure men with impunity, the consecration of so celebrated a man as Wesley would rouse the bishops themselves to make such inquiry of the Patriarch of Constantinople as would at once lay open his designs in this country. A strenuous supporter* of Wesley adduces this fact as an unfortunate instance of fanaticism, the ordination in an unintelligible tongue, and thus an unedifying right; saying of Wesley, "We allow that he was fanatical at times; but this only amounts to the confession that he had some taint of human infirmity cleaving to a nature in the main noble, self-possessed, and wise." Let us accept the apology; but let it be acknowledged that Wesley's plan is not only not *perfection*, but in no wise to be perpetuated.

Dr. Johnson thought that Sheridan took too much upon himself in presenting Home, the author of "Douglas," with a gold medal. He said "A medal has no value but as a stamp of merit; and was Sheridan to assume to himself the right of giving that stamp? If Sheridan was munificent enough to bestow a gold medal as an honorary reward of dramatic excellence, he should have requested one of the universities to choose the person on whom it should be conferred. Sheridan had no right to give a stamp of merit: *it was counterfeiting Apollo's coin.*" The man who liked not assumption in a literary sense, would neither approve of it in ecclesiastical performance; and yet, *mutatis nominibus*, we see the coin of the church counterfeited, not only by Wesley, but by many others.

Error must have its beginning. And on the general question of the origin of sects, may it not be pertinently asked: Whether the *first* person, who, after the lapse of 1500 years,

* Rev. O. T. Dobbin, in *Kitto's Journal of Sacred Literature*, Jan. 7, 1849. He also states, and so does Alexander Knox, that Wesley too often formed a favorable opinion of those about him; and the consequences were annoying, though the cause was rather a virtue. So was it with the amiable Bishop Heber.

ventured to call himself a minister * without having been ordained by a bishop, was *really right*, and that the whole Christian church, western and eastern, was from the days of the apostles, and for fifteen centuries after, entirely wrong and mistaken as to the real meaning of the words of Scripture concerning the Christian ministry? If the first adventurer was wrong, then all his successors, be they five, or fifty, or fifty thousand, are wrong also: but if right, then any one has Scriptural liberty to form a sect, and the only wonder is that, instead of one hundred sects, there are not one hundred thousand, and that an Elwall, and his Elwallians † do not arise,

* "During Fleetwood's management, the theatre was in difficulties, and bailiffs often in possession. The hat of King Richard the Third, by being adorned with jewels of paste, feathers, and other ornaments, seemed, to the sheriffs' officers, a prey worthy of their seizure; but honest Davy, Mr. Garrick's Welsh servant, told them they did not know what they were about. 'For look you,' said Davy, 'that hat belongs to the king.'" The fellows, imagining that what was meant of Richard the Third was spoken of George the Second, resigned their prey, though with some reluctance."—*Memoirs of David Garrick*, vol. i. p. 65.

The above anecdote is called to mind, when the pretensions of dissenting ministers are thrust forward. There is the counterfeit hat and the counterfeit king. Thus we find dissenters calling their sect (however insignificant) "the church"—their ministers style themselves "Reverend," take out degrees of D.D., &c, in distant lands, and array themselves in black coat and white neckcloth, thus imitating a *bonâ fide* clergyman of the Established Church. *Why they do so?* is a question to which an answer has never yet been obtained. Some old Wesleyan preachers were much opposed to such assumptions.—See *Life of Samuel Drew*, p. 519.

A rare instance of a proud dissenter is given us in the biographical and literary anecdotes of Mr. William Bowyer, in the person of a Charles Jennens, Esq. (an eccentric man, whether he had been churchman or dissenter), who, from his excess of pomp, acquired the title of *Solyman the Magnificent*. If his transit was only from one street to another not far distant, he always traveled with four horses and sometimes as many servants behind his carriage. In his progress up the paved court (to Mr. Bowyer's), a footman usually preceded him, to kick oyster-shells and other impedients out of his way. His obstinacy was equal to his vanity; for what he had once asserted, though manifestly false, he would always maintain. He wrote a pamphlet against Dr. Johnson, which he caused to be read aloud to himself every day for at least a month after its publication, while all the world was laughing at it and the writer of it. See p. 442, 443.

† See Boswell's Life, &c. p. 235.

like the armed ones of Marmion, out of every bush, on every side. Many sects must feel annoyed, when going to the root of their genealogical tree, to find it so stunted; commencing not with an apostle certainly, but with a Mr. Brown, or any other gentleman who thought it necessary to be violent or disorderly in advancing the peaceful kingdom of the Messiah —and wittily did Charles Wesley, as reported, reprove his own brother:

"How easily are bishops made
By man or woman's whim;
Wesley his hands on Coke hath laid,
*But who laid hands on him?*"

## METHODISTS.

Dr. Johnson owned that the Methodists had done good; had spread religious impressions among the vulgar part of mankind: "but," he said, "they had great bitterness against other Christians, and that he never could get a Methodist to explain in what he excelled others; that it always ended in the indispensable necessity of hearing one of their preachers."

In his life of Cheynell, where this Presbyterian boasts of exercising his ministry in a place where there had been little of the power of religion known or practiced, he says: "We now observe, that the Methodists, where they scatter their opinions, represent themselves as preaching the gospel to unconverted nations. And enthusiasts of all kinds have been inclined to disguise their particular tenets with pompous appellations, and to imagine themselves the great instruments of salvation!" It is said, that the shadow of learning is generally, like ghosts of deceased persons, the

"More fiercely bright, and larger than the life,"

more so than *shadow* or *ghost* can warrant.

He thought the expulsion of six students from the University of Oxford, who were Methodists, and would not desist from praying and exhorting, was extremely just and proper. "What have they to do at an university," he asked "who are not willing to be taught, but will presume to teach?

Where is religion to be learnt but at an university? Sir, they were examined, and found to be mighty ignorant fellows."

Boswell.—But, was it not hard, sir, to expel them; for I am told they were good beings?"

Johnson.—"I believe they might be good beings, but they were not fit to be in the University of Oxford. A cow is a very good animal in the field; but we turn her out of a garden."

We are told that Lord Elibank used to repeat this as an illustration uncommonly happy; but we must own, we can not altogether discern its justness or entire charity. The "good beings" might only teach what they were taught, and where then the harm? For all Christians have liberty to exhort, comfort, and rebuke; and if not fit to do these in the university, neither, in Johnson's opinion, should they have been fit for such performance in the world.

The Rev. Dr. Maxwell, some time preacher at the Temple, and a friend of Johnson's, says, "He observed, that the established clergy in general did not preach plain enough; and that polished periods and glittering sentences flew over the heads of the common people without any impression on their hearts. Something might be necessary, he observed, to excite the affections of the common people, who were sunk in languor and lethargy, and therefore he supposed that the new concomitants of Methodism might probably produce so desirable an effect."

On another occasion, fourteen years after, speaking of the religious discipline proper for unhappy convicts, he said, "Sir, one of our regular clergy will probably not impress their minds sufficiently; they should be attended by a Methodist preacher, or a Popish priest." It appeared, however, that the exertions of the chaplain of Newgate, the Rev. Mr. Vilette, had been very successful during a period of eighteen years.

He would not allow much merit to Whitfield's oratory. "His popularity, sir," said he, "is chiefly owing to the peculiarity of his manner. He would be followed by crowds were he to wear a night-cap in the pulpit, or were he to preach from a tree." He was at the same college with Johnson, who knew him, as he once said, smiling, "before he began

to be better than other people ;" yet he believed he sincerely meant well.

What effect would either Wesley or Whitfield, in their oratory, have made on Parliament? The calm good sense of the former would probably have told more than the fine glowing eloquence of the latter. Richard Sharp* says, "That the Methodist preacher would produce no other effect in Parliament but that of making himself ridiculous, is unquestionable ;" and he goes on to prove that he would be ineloquent there, because he would not have a constant regard to the quality of his audience, and thus would violate a prime rule of rhetoric. He quotes Dr. Browne,† as saying, "The pathetic orator, who throws a congregation of enthusiasts into tears and groans, would raise affections of a very different nature, should he attempt to proselyte an English Parliament:" and Dr. Leland,‡ "The orator who throws a congregation of enthusiasts into tears and groans, is in reality, no orator at all; because he owes his influence, not to clearness and strength of reasoning, not to dignity of sentiment, force, or elegance of expression, and the like, but to senseless exclamation, unmeaning rhapsody; or to grimace, to a sigh, to a rueful countenance: and if he would in vain endeavor to proselyte an English Parliament, it is for this very reason, because he is no orator; nor can any man without any of the apposita, the rational excellences and enjoying qualities of speech, be said to possess a degree of eloquence perfect in its kind."

The grimace and groans of the tabernacle have much ceased now among Wesleyan Methodists, and will cease more and more in proportion as the gravity and soundness of preachers, educated at the Theological college prevail. The Primitive Methodists, or Ranters, will for a while keep up these things among the ignorant and excitable people who love the marvelous, at the same time that it alarms them; for there is a kind of pleasure in this indulgence, and persons who can be made to cry dreadfully, will, in the

* Letters and Essays, 2d edit. p. 127. 1834.

† Essay on Ridicule.

‡ Leland's Dissertation on the Principles of Human Eloquence, chap. xiv.

course of nature, soon experience the re-acting sense of forgiveness. Such is self-delusion, that the pleasure here is *greater* in being cheated, than to cheat.

Boswell told him that he had been at a meeting of the people called Quakers, where he had heard a woman preach. Johnson replied, "Sir, a woman's preaching is like a dog walking on his hind legs—it is not done well, but you are surprised to find it done at all."

And not only surprised, but disgusted: for what is more inconsistent with the modesty and domestic propriety of woman, than the office of public preaching or speaking? Among the abuses of the Corinthian church rebuked by the Apostle, he notices the fact of women praying and preaching uncovered, which, he insinuates, places them rather in the condition of harlots. *

"Madness," said Johnson, "frequently discovers itself merely by unnecessary deviation from the usual modes of the world. My poor friend Smart showed the disturbance of his mind by falling upon his knees, and saying his prayers in the street, or in any other unusual place. Now, although, rationally speaking, it is greater madness not to pray at all, than to pray as Smart did, I am afraid there are so many that do not pray, that their understanding is not called in question."

Smart's piety was always exemplary and fervent. We are told that in composing his religious poems, he was frequently so impressed with sentiments of devotion as to write particular passages on his knees.

He wrote many witty poems, such as "The pretty Barkeeper of the Mitre," under the signature of "Mr. Lun," in

* He once said, "Supposing a wife to be of a studious or argumentative turn, it would be very troublesome, for instance, if a woman should continually dwell upon the subject of the Arian heresy." Sir Walter Scott advised men never to marry religious wives; by which he probably meant, as above, controversial, or, it may be, canting ones! But Hannah More noticed also the watchwords of ladies not religious, saying, "Observe only, whether, after you have heard a lady begin to speak of the clergy, under the appellation of the *parsons*, you do not in a short time hear Christianity spoken of as a *particular system*," &c. This was about the time of the French Revolution, 1798.

the Student; and his lines on the sudden death of a clergyman (one of his serious poems), thus end:

> "Better than what the pencil's daub can give,
> Better than all that Phidias ever wrought,
> Is this—that what he taught shall ever live,
> And what he lived for ever shall be taught."

In common with literary men, he had much shyness of manner. It is related of him, that having undertaken to introduce his wife to Lord Darlington, he had no sooner mentioned her name to his lordship, than he retreated suddenly, as if stricken with a panic, from the room, and from the house, leaving her to follow, overwhelmed with confusion.

Johnson evidently had him in view, when at another time, he said, "Many a man is mad in certain instances, and goes through life without having it perceived. For example, a madness has seized a person, of supposing himself obliged literally to pray continually; had the madness turned the opposite way, and the person thought it a crime ever to pray, it might not improbably have continued unobserved." Even in these remarks, the religious integrity of Johnson's mind is seen.

Let us close these remarks on Methodism with a quotation from a book* written by a man of sense and of great discernment. He is speaking of humility, and the false humilities, and has just told us that the most common of the spurious humilities is that by which a general language of self-disparagement is substituted for a distinct discernment, and specific acknowledgment of our real faults; that the humble individual of this class will declare himself to be very incontestably a miserable sinner, but at the same time there is no particular fault or error that can be imputed to him from which he will not find himself to be happily exempt, when he goes on to say,† "Of all false humilities, the most false is to be found in that meeting of extremes, wherein humility is corrupted into pride. John Wesley, when he was desirous to fortify his followers against ridicule, taught them to

* Notes from Life, in Six Essays, by Henry Taylor, 3d. edit. p. 50. Published by Murray.

† P. 54, 55.

court it. "God forbid," said he, "that we should not be the laughing-stock of mankind." But it is through pride, and not in humility, that any man will desire to be a laughing-stock. And though it may seem at first sight that he has attained to an independence of mankind when he can brave their laughter, yet this is a fallacious appearance; it will be found that so far as his humility was corrupted, his independence was undermined; and while courting the ridicule of the world, he is *in reality courting the admiration and applause of his party or sect, or fearing their rebuke.* This is the dependence into which he has fallen, and there is probably no slavery of the heart which is comparable to that of sectarian pride. Moreover, Mr. Wesley's followers doubtless deemed that the laughers were in danger of hell-fire. Where then was their charity when they desired to be laughed at by all mankind? Or if (without desiring it) they deemed mankind, themselves only excepted, to be in so reprobate a state that the religious must needs be a laughing-stock—was this their humility? I wish to speak of Mr. Wesley with respect, not to say reverence; but in this instance I think that his appeal was made to a temper of mind in his followers which was not purely Christian. It is not the meek who will throw out this sort of challenge and défiance; and it is pride and not humility which we shall find to lie at the bottom of any such ostentatious self-abasement,

> "For pride,
> Which is the devil's toasting fork, doth toast
> Him brownest that his whiteness vaunteth most."

There is certainly something very unpleasing, to say the least of it, in the ideas of the inferior class of Methodists. Their notions, we may observe (though this is not the place to enlarge upon them), that they are instantly saved, and of their perfection, are as inconsistent as they are absurd; for what advantage is there in their belief of sudden salvation, and of perfection, when on the very next day to their profession of such blessings, they may not be in possession of either? No, the language of the Lord's Prayer, and the

general tone of the Liturgy of the Church of England, must be the language and feeling of every Christian man unto his dying day. He is a sinner unto the last, looking only for salvation to the mercy of God in Christ Jesus. The remark of a French critic* on the Greek statuaries is singular and delicate. "They never," says he, "presumed to make use of the perfect tense, when the artist set his name to the statue. It was always ἐποίησε, not πεποίηκη. He never ventured to affirm that his work was *perfect*." The application is obvious; let us acknowledge its lesson in ourselves.

"A man," observes the pious Cecil, "who thinks himself to have attained Christian perfection, in the sense in which it has been insisted on by some persons" (in evident allusion to Methodists), "either deceives himself by calling sin infirmity—or the demon of pride overcomes the demon of lust."

How admirably and charitably does Southey conclude his "Life of Wesley," with the hope that Wesleyans may be led to act in closest union with the church! and he says, "The obstacles to this are surely not insuperable, perhaps not so difficult as they may appear." Let us believe and hope that this union may be at no distant time thoroughly effected and thus one cause of scandal against Christianity be removed.

* Andrewes's Anecdotes, p. 60.

## CHAPTER XVII.

### ROMAN CATHOLICS.

Dr. Johnson's principles and feelings were ever ranged on the side of authority, antiquity, and establishment. We must not be surprised, therefore, to find him more favorably inclined toward the Roman Catholic than the Presbyterian church : but we may always be gratified in knowing that he rejected error under whatever countenance of authority it might be broached, and in common with all great minds loved truth in its solidity and simplicity. Devoutness of heart, constant mindfulness of the presence of God, reliance on the work of Christ, prayer for the guiding and sustaining influences of the Holy spirit—these formed his religion, and he sought more the practice of these, than the mere excitement of listening to extemporaneous preachers, or any endeavor to invent and broach new systems of doctrine.

There is a conversation of Johnson's recorded, which shows to us the chastened sentiments of a really God-fearing and God-worshiping mind. It took place at Oxford between himself and Dr. Adams, the Master of Pembroke College. Johnson said, "I know of no good prayers but those in the 'Book of Common Prayer.'" Dr. Adams observed, in a very earnest manner, "I wish, sir, you would compose some family prayers." Johnson replied, "I will not compose prayers for you, sir, because you can do it for yourself. But I have thought of getting together all the books of prayers which I could, selecting those which should appear to me the best, putting out some, inserting others, adding some prayers of my own, and perfixing a discourse on prayer." "We all now gathered about him," relates Boswell, "and two or three of us at a time joined in pressing him to execute this plan. He seemed to be a little displeased at the manner of our importunity, and in great agitation call out, '*Do not talk thus of*

*what is so awful.* I know not what time God will allow me in this world. There are many things which I wish to do.' Some persisted, and Dr. Adams said, 'I never was more serious about any thing in my life.' Johnson exclaimed, '*Let me alone—let me alone—I am overpowered.*' And then he put his hands before his face, and reclined for some time upon the table." We have now his Meditations and Prayers, which are very valuable, and wholly his own, as arranged by Dr. Strahan, although we may believe that this gentleman had no license for their publication from Dr. Johnson himself.

It must be conceded, that devoutness is a characteristic more of the Roman Catholic than the Protestant church. We see Roman Catholic chapels open throughout the day, and nearly at all hours persons are entering them, and, quietly kneeling down, while deep silence reigns throughout the place, they offer up their prayers. Whatever be the nature of those prayers, the spirit of devotion is there. And while this continual refreshment of the soul—for such, if sincere, it must needs be to a Roman Catholic—is being experienced, there is nothing of a religious kind going on in Protestant churches, or Protestant houses. The door of their sanctuary is closed from Sunday to Sunday, and if laid open, no one enters it for the purpose of unseen and silent prayer; no little company, relying on the gracious promise of Christ's presence, is there; and nothing induces our people to gather together in the temple, unless preaching be announced. There is a principle prevailing in the bosoms of our Roman Catholic brethren, which we need to cherish in our own; and for which we who boast of a purer faith and more primitive practice ought to be more eminent. We are all looking out for gifts rather than for giving, and thus we may be too lamentably liable to foster feelings of conceit and selfishness rather than those attendant on humble-mindedness and holiness of heart. Let us show forth Dr. Johnson as a firm, undeviating Church of England man, yet without uncharitableness toward his Roman Catholic brethren: and because of his liberality and charity, often, as in the case of Grotius and others, misrepresented as leaning too much toward Popery in its entireness.

Boswell once said to him, "So, sir, you are no great enemy to the Roman Catholic religion?"

JOHNSON.—"No more, sir, than to the Presbyterian religion."

BOSWELL.—"You are joking."

JOHNSON.—"No, sir, I really think so. Nay, sir, of the two, I prefer the Popish!" And he then entered into some reasons of which we have before treated. In the above remark, we see nothing more than a little preference given to the one more than the other: but he disliked them both. The feeling which we have above noted, together with his political principles, would necessarily lead him to give some preference to the Roman Catholic religion, and yet, if we in any way measure his dislike of it by his dislike of the Presbyterian manner, we must see that he disapproved it greatly, although for very different reasons.

Of conversion from the Roman Catholic church he said, as reported by Sir William Scott, "A man who is converted from Protestantism to Popery, may be sincere: he parts with nothing: he is only superadding to what he already had. But a convert from Popery to Protestantism gives up so much of what he has held as sacred as any thing that he retains—there is so much *laceration of mind* in such a conversion, that it can hardly be sincere and lasting." Boswell, the Presbyterian, adds, "The truth of this reflection may be confirmed by many and eminent instances, some of which will occur to most of my readers."

Croker expresses himself as not aware of such instances, and thinks that Boswell alluded to Gibbon, whose conversion from Protestantism *to* Popery, and back again, and which ended in infidelity, is not a case in point. A direct case, in our days, has occurred in that of Blanco White: and he also states that many hundreds, on giving up Popery, fall into infidelity—they must believe all or none—for, probably, they have been accustomed to believe so much, that they think our religion too meagre for notice.

Bishop Elrington expressed his suprise, that Johnson should have forgotten Latimer, Ridley, Hooper, and all those of all nations, who have renounced Popery. To many

zealous Protestants this remark of Dr. Johnson's will be an exceedingly startling one. And yet we can, on deliberation, well discern a goodness in his meaning. Infidelity was always the horror of his mind: he could not sit in company with an infidel. His idea is, Better believe too much than too little; and he fears, in many minds, the effect of a descent from the greater to the lesser, lest the man should find himself rolled impetuously to the bottom of the hill, when he should have walked calmly to his residence on the middle of it. We must remember, too, that a Roman Catholic parts from what *he* has been taught to regard as sacred, though we regard it as akin to profane: and while we may say that we lead him to other doctrines which may better fill up his mind, yet the shock is in some degree or another inevitable, and the multitude can not bear such a shock, although it be from mere superstitious ideas and observances. Yet no man can read the two articles following after the Preface to our Book of Common Prayer—no man can look into the *addenda* of creed and ceremony in the Roman Catholic church—and not pronounce *restoration* to be absolutely desirable: and therefore, the Protestant is not responsible for some or many untoward effects accruing from a lessening of hold on Popish superstitions and practices, and it is his duty to win minds from these, whatever he may think of the feasibility of holding a true saving belief in conjunction with them, on all essential points of the Christian religion. Dr. Johnson's observation should certainly excite to great care and preparation in the matter of attempting and effecting conversions from the Roman Catholic to the Protestant religion, and thus regarded as an exhortation, it may be of eminent advantage, however we might dislike it if viewed in the light of daunting or preventing men in a work for which the Church of England is so well adapted, so well accoutred, and offering such a substantial settledness in a home as fully sacred as it is really primitive.

Let us proceed to a sort of examination of Johnson by Boswell, on certain Roman Catholic points of belief. He asked, "What do you think, sir, of Purgatory, as believed by the Roman Catholics?"

JOHNSON.—"Why, sir, it is a very harmless doctrine. They are of opinion that the generality of mankind are neither so obstinately wicked as to deserve everlasting punishment, nor so good as to merit being admitted into the society of blessed spirits: and therefore, that God is graciously pleased to allow of a middle state, where they may be purified by certain degrees of suffering. You see, sir, there is nothing unreasonable in this."

Johnson states this doctrine fairly, and according to the Roman Catholic belief: at least, just as it is laid down by the Rev. Dr. George Hay.* And the celebrated Dr. Milner, after quoting the texts of Luke xii. 59; Matt. xii. 32; Luke xvi. 22; 1 Cor. iii. 13, 15; 1 Pet. iii. 19, &c., on which the doctrine is founded, and the analogies by which it is inferred, gives very Protestant authorities for the practice of praying for the dead, and among others, "the religious Dr. Johnson, whose published Meditations prove, that he constantly prayed for his deceased wife."†

Dr. Milner also states, that the famous Dr. Priestley, being on his death-bed, called for Simpson's work on the Duration of Future Punishments, which he recommended in these terms, "It contains my sentiments; we shall all meet finally: we only require different degrees of discipline, suited to our different tempers, to prepare us for final happiness."‡

But this is a presumptuous notion, unwarranted by God's word. Those who heard our Lord speak (Matt. xxv. 41) would, considering the known opinion of the Jews and ancients, certainly receive the word "everlasting" in its unrestricted sense; and it has been pithily observed, *if there is no everlasting punishment, neither is there everlasting reward or happiness;* for the same word is used to denote the duration of either. At the same time, we might hold the doctrine

* Hay's "Sincere Christian instructed in the Faith of Christ, from the Written Word." Richardson, Derby. Vol. ii. p. 115.

† "The End of Religious Controversy," by the Rev. John Milner, D.D. F.S.A. p. 416. Dr. Johnson prayed for his deceased wife only after a conditional manner, and with extreme reverence and modesty; different from the prayer of St. Augustine for his pious mother Monica.

‡ Is not Dr. M. wrong in applying this, which relates rather to the doctrine of universal redemption than to purgatory?

of both eternal and limited punishments without much harm, inasmuch as we know, that as regards human laws, certainty more than severity of punishment influences mankind, and many may be led to commit lesser offenses under the idea that God will not assign them to eternal perdition for such, while they might be induced to avoid such offenses under the belief that they would certainly be punished painfully, though not eternally, for their committal, in the next life. Yet, let us allow that the reasonable necessity for this doctrine of Purgatory is much weakened, when we consider that there are differerent degrees* of reward and glory in heaven, so that the loss of any degree of final happiness ought to act as a powerful persuasive with men to abstain from every kind of offense, and to seek the aid of the grace of God for such entire abstinence.

Dr. Johnson appears to have had no doubt of a middle state: and no man can deny the existence of paradise as inferior to the highest heaven.† He only doubted whether he

* This doctrine is well argued by Dr. Green, Bishop of Lincoln, in a tract (The Four Last Things) published by the Christian Knowledge Society.

† Dr. Field, in his support of Calvin against the imputations of Bellarmine, tells us, that "the custom of remembering the departed, naming their names at the Holy Table, &c. was a most ancient and godly custom; neither is it in any way disliked by us. And surely it appears, that this was the cause that Aerius was condemned of heretical rashness, in that he durst condemn this laudable and ancient custom of the commemoration of the dead. In this sort they did most religiously observe and keep, at the Lord's Table, the commemoration of all the patriarchs, prophets, apostles, evangelists, martyrs, and confessors, yea of Mary the mother of our Lord, to whom it can not be conceived, that by *prayer they did wish deliverance out of purgatory, since no man ever thought them to be there;* but if they wished any thing, it was the deliverance from the power of death, which as yet tyrannizeth over one part of them; the speedy destroying of the last enemy, which is death, the hastening of their resurrection, and joyful public acquittal of them in that great day wherein they shall stand to be judged before the Judge of the quick and dead. This was the practice of the whole church, and this the meaning of their commemorations and prayers, which was good, and no way to be disliked." He states further, that "men out of their own private errors and fancies used such prayers for the dead, as the Romanists themselves dare not justify." (Dr. Field's Book of the Church, book iii. chap. xvii. Edit. 1606.

might be allowed to pray for a deceased person: and he only prayed thus conditionally, not positively, as Dr. Milner would have us believe that he did. In a prayer for his departed wife, we have his two opinions blended: "And, O Lord, *so far as it may be lawful in me*, I commend to thy Fatherly goodness the soul of my departed wife: beseeching thee to grant her whatever is best *in her present state*, and *finally to receive her to eternal happiness*." Who can object to this, when we know that the resurrection and the judgment must take place previous to the final destination of a soul; and no soul would be brought out of hell or heaven to be judged? Surely, therefore, there must be a middle state in which the soul is placed after its flight from this world, and previous to its union with the body at the resurrection, and in the judgment. It would be a blessed privilege, especially in certain cases, if we might be permitted to follow the dead with our prayers; but still, we dare not trust that such permission is granted, for, excepting in the Apocrypha, we have no clear intimation in the sacred Scriptures of its allowance.

Croker observes, that *sometimes* Dr. Johnson prays, that the Almighty may "*have had mercy*" on the departed, as if he believed the sentence to have been already pronounced. Yes, He may have had mercy; but this decides not the sentence in its fullness: that irrevocable sentence which is to be delivered on the Judgment Day.

"But then, sir, continued Boswell, "their masses for the dead?" JOHNSON.—"Why, sir, if it be once established that there are souls in Purgatory, it is as proper to pray for *them*, as for our brethren of mankind who are yet in this life."

BOSWELL.—"The idolatry of the Mass."

JOHNSON.—"Sir, there is no idolatry in the Mass. They believe God to be there, and they adore Him."

They believe a piece of bread to be God, and adoring God, and not a piece of bread, they are not guilty of idolatry. Were the piece of bread only representative of God, and did

also the Appendix to Book iii.) His remarks on this subject, which he regards as Protestant doctrine and generally allowed, may not be agreeable to the tone of much of the religion of the present day, but they fully bear out Dr. Johnson.

they adore it, they would be guilty of idolatry. This seems to be Dr. Johnson's excuse for them; an excuse valid enough for escape from the charge, founded on the marvelous monstrosity of their belief. On this ground, the Heathens who worship and pray to images as gods, are cleared from the charge of idolatry. In both Catholic and Heathen the worship may be consistent with the belief; but the belief is monstrous. Let us mark how these erroneous doctrines and practices all consistently proceed one out of the other. If there be Purgatory, then prayers for the dead; if individual prayers and sacrifice, then united and public prayer and sacrifice also.

The above words of Dr. Johnson must not be read as an approval of the Mass, and as though he thought no idolatry was involved in its adoration. No, he merely states what might be the consistent practice springing out of a certain belief. He himself did not believe God to be there: for he did not hold the doctrine of Transubstantiation. "If," he once said, after quoting Tillotson, "God had never spoken figuratively, we might hold that he speaks literally, when He says, 'This is my Body.'" Boswell pressed him by saying, "But what do you say, sir, to the ancient and continued tradition of the church upon this point?" JOHNSON.—"Tradition, sir, has no place where the Scriptures are plain; and *tradition can not persuade a man into a belief of transubstantiation.* Able men, indeed, have *said* they believed it." On another occasion when, as Boswell tells us, he was in a frame "calm, gentle, wise, holy," he spoke against the belief of transubstantiation. This is necessary to be observed, lest we rashly accuse him of showing too much favor to Roman Catholic doctrines, whereas he only seeks to excuse their consistency, not their creed.

"The worship of saints?" further exclaimed Boswell. JOHNSON.—"Sir, they do not worship saints: they invoke them: they only ask their prayers." But he was opposed to the invocation of saints. Toplady, speaking of Romanists, asked, "Does not their invocation of saints suppose omnipresence in the saints?" "No, sir, it supposes only pluri-presence; and when spirits are divested of matter, it seems

probable that they should see with more extent than when in an embodied state. There is therefore no approach to an invasion of any of the Divine attributes, in the invocation of saints. *But I think it is will-worship and presumption. I see no command for it, and therefore think it safer not to practice it.*"

There seems to be an over refinement in the distinction between omnipresence and pluri-presence. We can only understand it in this way; namely, that the departed saints are allowed to hear the prayers of all those whom they knew on earth; a privilege which they did not possess on earth, because their bodies confined them to one spot. Thus, when in the flesh, only those friends who could be about them and see them, could say, "Pray for me:" but now, having cast off the body, the spirit could have greater freedom, and be enabled to see and hear those who called and besought them from a distance, as well as those who were nigh. Still only the voice of friends would reach them: for the doctrine would be held under the idea of an earthly taint of saintship still clinging to them, and with the belief that God would graciously allow a sainted spirit on the earth to call to its sainted sister or brother in heaven, and thus effectually realize the communion of saints—of all saints that were joined on earth of the dead and of the living. This would be the idea of pluri-presence: and then we extend it further, and suppose all the church in Heaven to be mindful of the whole church on earth with permission to hear and urge the requests of individuals of the church militant, and then we arrive at the idea of omnipresence.

"As to the invocation of saints," said Dr. Johnson, at another time, "though I do not think it authorized, it appears to me, that 'the communion of saints' in the Creed means the communion with the saints in heaven, as connected with 'the holy Catholic Church.' Yes, they may be united with us, and we *shall* be united with them. They may be united with, and regardful of us (Rev. vi. 9–11), and we know that we, if faithful and holy, are to be hereafter with 'the spirits of just men made perfect.'"

But the communion of saints is a very different matter

from the invocation of saints. We may believe that the saints can pray for us,* and with a purer and stronger power of prayer, in their disembodied state, although we dare not pray to them. They could pray for us when on the earth—why not when in Paradise? Their prayers then for us would not hinder Christ's gracious intercession for our souls, any more than their prayers on earth did; and, "Brethren, pray for us," is a grand exhortation of St. Paul. Our Reformers held this belief,† and it is a comfortable one, in no way de-

* Dr. Field supports this view in some very remarkable passages (book iii. chap. 31), fully coinciding with Bishop Ken's sentiments. He is treating on the Heresies of Vigilantius, saying, "The next heresy that we are supposed to fall into, is that of Vigilantius. The opinions imputed to him by Jerome, and disliked, are these: The first, that the saints departed pray not for the living, &c." Dr. Field answers, "For the opinions wherewith Jerome chargeth him, this we briefly answer. First, if he absolutely denied that the saints departed do pray for us, as it seemeth he did by Jerome's reprehension, *we think he erred. For we hold they do pray in genere.*" See also Appendix to book iii. Answer to Brereley's Objections.

† Bishop Ridley wrote thus to a fellow-martyr, "Brother Bradford, as long as I shall understand thou art in thy journey, by God's grace I shall call upon our heavenly Father, for Christ's sake, to let thee safely home: and then, good brother, speak you, and pray for the remnant which are to suffer for Christ's sake; according to that thou shalt then know more clearly."—*Letters of the Martyrs.* Edited by the Rev. Edward Bickersteth.

The sainted Bishop Ken, one of the greatest glories of our church, and worthy to be reckoned among the luminaries of the Church Catholic—in his "Exposition of the Church Catechism," which received the imprimatur of the Archbishop of Canterbury's chaplain in the year 1665, says, "I believe, O most holy Jesu, that thy saints here below, have communion with thy saints above (Heb. xii. 22); they praying for us in heaven, we *are* on earth celebrating their memorials, rejoicing at their bliss, giving Thee thanks for their labor of love, and imitating their examples—for which all love, all glory be to Thee." These words are copied as they stand in the original edition; but probably the word "*are*" should be "here."

Bishop Heber's beautiful letter of condolence to Miss Stone, in "Narrative of a Journey," &c. vol. iii. p. 309, is well known. He says, "That the spirits in Paradise pray for those whom they have left behind, I can not doubt, since I can not suppose that they cease to love us there; *and your dear brother is thus still employed in your service and still recommending you to the throne of mercy*, to the all-sufficient and promised help of that God who is the Father of the fatherless, and

pendent on the truth or error of the doctrine of the invocation of saints. They may be enabled to pray not only for friends left behind, but for the whole world of men, and in doing this in Paradise, they would do no more than what they were allowed to do when mortals on the earth. They would still pray, not in their own strength, but through the "one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus."

"I am talking all this time," said Johnson, "of the *doctrines* of the Church of Rome. I grant you that, in *practice*, Purgatory is made a lucrative imposition, and that the people do become idolatrous as they recommend themselves to the tutelary protection of particular saints."

The vast and ridiculous extent to which this tutelary guardianship is carried, is readily discerned by all who know any thing of the practices of Romanists. And yet, in a work highly esteemed among them, first published by their eminent divine Gother, and republished by Bishop Challoner, these two remarkable sentences occur: "Cursed is he that believes the saints in heaven to be his redeemers, that prays to them as such, or that gives God's honor to them, or to any creature whatsoever. Amen." "Cursed is every goddess worshiper, that believes the blessed Virgin Mary to be any more than a creature; that worships her or puts his trust in her more than in God; that believes her above her Son, or that she can in any thing command Him. Amen." Let us bind our Roman Catholic brethren to this, and there is an end of their idolatry. But we know the sentiments and practice of the great mass of them to be otherwise;* and, indeed, their divines must be aware of it, or these prohibitions would not have been issued.

of that blessed Son who hath assured us that they who mourn shall be comforted."

We find, also, that truly evangelical minister, the late Rev. Hugh Stowell, state it as his hope that he may be permitted to pray for his children with more power than when on earth; and, if so, promising them his prayers.

Of the communion of the earthly and heavenly church, see 1 Cor. xii. 12, 13; Ephes. i. 10; Heb. xii. 23; Rev. vi. 9; xii. 11. See also Dr. Field's Third Book on the church, chapters 17 and 31.

* See Tyler's "What is Romanism?" being Tracts published by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge.

We come nearest to the invocation of saints or angels, collectively, when we chant our favorite doxology,

> "Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
> Praise Him, all creatures here below;
> *Praise Him, above, ye heavenly host,*
> Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost."

But here there is no abuse of doctrine—no trusting in angels or saints for blessing or guardianship from them; it is mere acknowledgment of the oneness of the church in glory and in the church in weakness, and with this acknowledgment an invitation.

"Confession?" persevered Boswell. JOHNSON.—"Why, I don't know but that is a good thing. The Scripture says, 'Confess your faults one to another;' and the priests confess as well as the laity. Then it must be considered that their absolution is only upon repentance, and often upon penance also. You think your sins may be forgiven without penance, upon repentance alone."

This is rightly stated, for the best Roman Catholic authorities tell us, that confession of sins is necessary for obtaining absolution; without it, the grace of the sacrament of penance will not be bestowed. There can be no doubt that confession of sins is a Scriptural doctrine, and that its practice is incumbent on every Christian. But the Roman Catholic church by its custom utterly deprives such a practice of its very essence. For what should confession be? Open and honest, and before all men. How is it with Romanists? Dark and concealed, and only to a priest, who is bound not to divulge it. What is the object of confession, and what would be its result? Its object is the exposure of the heart, especially to those who have most interest in knowing your heart; and the result would be, that no concealment of crime would ever be kept up; and hence, when men felt they must confess, crime would almost cease. What use to cheat a man in a bill if you must go and tell him of it the next week, and make reparation? Tell *him;* not tell it only to another man who you know must not tell it to another, and then practice a secret penance of some kind, thus giving false

satisfaction to your own deceived heart, and doing no good to your defrauded neighbor. In short, confession is another term for an opened heart; but, depend upon it, true and honest confession of sins is the hardest task that ever was, or ever can be imposed on the human heart. It is one of the main things needed to regenerate the world (it is a fruit of the spiritual mind), but it is the last that the tongue of man will duly perform.

Confession of sins should be made to the clergy, it is true; but not to them only. It should always be made to them, because they are the instructors of those that are gone out of the way, the healers of the broken-hearted, the physicians of the soul. How can they prescribe so well, as when they know the especial complaint under which divers persons are respectively laboring, unless they know the sin which doth so easily beset them? See how you tell your bodily physician all your bodily ailments, how minute and careful you are; and if you miss acquainting him with any particular circumstance, his efforts may not meet your case. So should you be careful with your spiritual physician, but not with him only, but with others. For if you trust a secret to him which you wish others not to know, you place yourself in his power; and although he may never desire to make use of this power to your disadvantage in any way, yet, as a general rule, confession to the clergy only would be found to be inconvenient, as well as missing its essential mark; and, indeed, no confession should be made to the clergy without giving full permission to them to divulge it to some others; and a main object of your going to a minister for confession should be, that he might, at your earnest desire, communicate it to the persons whom you had injured in any way, provided no serious hurt would accrue to others from such confession.

Some kinds of Christians, the Wesleyans for instance, approach near to the system of the confessional. They confess their sins in their band-meetings, but then these are private, only entered by means of a ticket, and perhaps the confessions are not divulged, especially to those who have most interest in knowing them. A Wesleyan may exhibit sorrow for sin, he may say that he has been sorely tempted, and he may

seek the aid of the prayers of his brethren; but will he say, I have stolen a pair of stockings off such a man's garden-hedge, and I must tell you and him of it; I have entertained such and such a spite against such and such a person, and I must out with it; I have sold such a one an inferior article at too high a price, and I must go and tell him—will he do this? for without this freeness and openness, let him not flatter himself that there can be confession: he is in no wise better than a Romanist. It has been observed, that too often a Wesleyan confession or statement of experience is nothing more or less than a confession of virtues—that is, a confession of former sins and later virtues; in this latter light the man wishing to be taken at his own word of himself, when his actions ought to speak for him, not his tongue. There is an excellent paper in the Rambler (No. 28),* which ought to be read by every one who desires to know himself before he seeks to propagate his own reputation, and to find how men more grossly practice imposture on themselves than on others. But real confession of sins, as they should be Scripturally confessed, is one of the best cures for the pride, the boasting, the imposture of man.

Speaking of Wesleyans, we may note Wesley's large and charitable mind. Though so much opposed to Popery, he could say, "I firmly believe that many members of the Church of Rome have been holy men, and that many are so

* How excellent is this sentence: "There are men," writes Dr. Johnson, "who always confound the praise of goodness with the practice, and who believe themselves mild and moderate, charitable and faithful, *because they have exerted their eloquence* in commendation of mildness, fidelity, and other virtues. This is an error almost universal among those that converse much with disputants, with such whose fear or interest disposes them to a seeming reverence for any declaration, however enthusiastic, and submission to any boast, however arrogant. Having none to recall their attention to their lives, they rate themselves *by the goodness of their opinions, and forget how much more easily men may show their virtue in their talk than in their actions.*"

It is well recorded of Sir Matthew Hale, that he for a long time concealed the consecration of himself to the stricter duties of religion, lest, by some flagitious and shameful action, he should bring piety into disgrace. This is related by Dr. Johnson, in No. 14 of the Rambler.

now." And he says in another place, "Several of them have attained to as high a pitch of sanctity as human nature is capable of arriving at."

Mrs. Fletcher, wife of the eminent Rev. John Fletcher of Madeley, says,* "Reading the life of Ignatius Loyola (the founder of the Jesuits), and especially what pains he took, and what labor he went through to gain souls, I could not but be struck at the glaring difference between him and me. One day, having taken a step he believed to be his duty, but which caused him both pain and ignominy, and being rebuked by a friend, he replied, 'I should not object to traverse all the streets of Paris barefoot, with horns on my head, and clothed in the most ridiculous habit, could it but gain one soul to God.' The conviction," she continues, "immediately struck me, that all I wanted was to be filled with the love of God, and that would produce every effect in its proper order. Lord, let my incessant cry be for this! Oh give me this most excellent gift of charity!"

This excellent woman, and we love her for her love, notwithstanding all her dreams and extravagances, had a correspondence with a Roman Catholic priest, in which also she exhibits much loving comprehension of mind. She says, with remarkable concentration of light and love—for many, as Wesley said, have much love and but little light—she says, "With regard to the doctrine of Calvin, which represents the love of God in a very wrong light, I therein agree with you, and mourn that so many good men do hold it. Had not Christ died for *all*, the apostles could not have been commanded 'to preach the Gospel to every creature.'" She reminds him how sweetly hereafter, they may forget the names of Romanist and Protestant: she commends the Life of M. de Rentz, as a book she much loves: and writes to the priest, "I can embrace you as a brother in the Lord, and regard you as such."

Of this kind of generous disposition, was the pious Hannah More. She writes† to one of her sisters, of Dr. Johnson, "He reproved me with pretended sharpness for reading, 'Les

* Her Life, p. 247.
† Vol. i. p. 211 of her Life.

Pensées de Pascal,'* or any of the Port Royal authors, alleging, that as a good Protestant, I ought to abstain from books written by Catholics. I was beginning to stand upon my defense, when he took me with both hands, and with a tear running down his cheeks, 'Child,' said he, with the most affecting earnestness, 'I am heartily glad that you read pious books by whomsoever they may be written.'"

We may readily see, that Dr. Johnson's rebuke was *pretended*, for his manner was often playful; and she evidently adopts his exhortation. Johnson really had large views of religion, for we have it recorded by Boswell, that once he and Johnson talked of the Roman Catholic religion, and how little difference there was in essential matters between it and Church of England, or Presbyterianism. Johnson said, "True, sir, all denomimations of Christians have really little difference in point of doctrine, though they may differ widely in external forms. There is a prodigious difference between the external form of one of your Presbyterian churches in Scotland, and the church in Italy; yet the doctrine taught is essentially the same." Boswell lets this pass without observation or comment, so may we. We may, however, notice that it was *manner* in prayer and preaching that contributed a good deal to prevent Johnson from entering a Presby-

* Hannah More was also an ardent admirer of Fénélon, of whom we may relate this anecdote: Lord Peterborough, after a visit paid to Fénélon, Archbishop of Cambray, said to Pope, "Fénélon is a man that was cast in a particular mould, that was never made use of for any body else. He's a delicious creature. But I was forced to get from him as soon as I possibly could, for else he would have made me *pious*."—*Warton's Essay on Pope.*

Of our Warburton, much the same observation, though in a rather different sense, was made. When Lord-Chancellor Yorke had obtained great reputation in public life, and the most brilliant prospects were before him, thus he addressed the great scholar and divine: "I endeavor to convince myself it is dangerous to converse with you, for you show me so much more happiness in the quiet pursuits of knowledge and enjoyments of friendship than is to be found in lucre or ambition, that I go back into the world with regret, where few things are to be attained without more agitation, both of reason and the passions, than either moderate parts or a benevolent mind can support."—*Lord Campbell's Lives of the Chancellors*, vol. v. p. 390.

terian place of worship in Scotland; he read the books of Scotch divines, and approved them.

At another time, he repeated his observation, that the differences among Christians are really of no consequence. "For instance," he said, "if a Protestant objects to a Papist, 'You worship images;' the Papist can answer, 'I do not insist on your doing it; you may be a very good Papist without it; I do it only as a help to my devotion.'" This is very liberal, but still a Protestant may say, I not only wish to avoid worshiping of images myself, but I go further, and desire to discountenance any society in which it is done, and thus protect others as well as clear myself. It is but fair to mention, that nothing do the Roman Catholics repel with greater indignation than the idea that any worship or adoration is paid by them to images, so that any one can love, adore, and trust in an image as his God. They abhor and detest such a thought, and bitterly complain of the injustice of the accusation.*

## CONVENTS AND MONASTERIES.

Of convents and monasteries he spoke much. "If I were to visit Italy," he said, "my curiosity would be more attracted by convents than by palaces; though I am afraid that I should find expectation in both places equally disappointed, and life in both places supported with impatience and quitted with reluctance." In this remark we observe two prevailing habits of his own mind—his religion, preferring convents to palaces; his fear of death, expecting to find it reign in religious and irreligious people alike. We may regret that a visit to Italy, projected at two periods of his life, did not take place.

He said, "If convents should be allowed at all, they should only be retreats for persons unable to serve the public, or who have served it. It is our first duty to serve society, this service the fruit of our religion; and, after we have done that, we may attend wholly to the salvation of our own souls.

* See Dr. Hay's Sincere Christian, p. 231.

A youthful passion for abstracted devotion should not be encouraged." We may rightly ask: If all good people are to retire from the world, what would the world become? Good people are the good leaven of society that maintain its integrity.

"There are no anchorites in heaven," says Bishop Patrick; "why on earth?"

One day, a very fine one, he was walking among the ruins of St. Andrew's, and took off his hat while he was upon any part of the ground where the Cathedral had stood. He talked of Knox and his mob, and he spoke of retirement from the world. He thought a man might retire when he had done his duty to society; but love of his neighbor should cause him to bear a part in active life. "Those who are exceedingly scrupulous (which I do not approve, for I am no friend to scruples), and find their scrupulosity invincible, or those who can not resist temptations, and find they make themselves worse by being in the world, without making it better, may retire." His enthusiasm must have been rapidly excited by the scene around him, when he farther exclaimed, "I never read of a hermit, but in imagination I kiss his feet; never of a monastery, but I could fall on my knees and kiss the pavement. But I think putting young people there, who know nothing of life, nothing of retirement, is dangerous and wicked." And by a subsequent sentence, he at once explains what he meant before, in saying that it is our first duty to serve society, &c., a saying which has been much misrepresented, as though we might serve the world for a time, and become religious in old age only. "It is a saying," he says, "as old as Hesiod: *Ἔργα νεῶν, βούλαι τὲ μέσων, εὐγαι τὲ γερόντων.** That is a very noble line: *not that young men should not pray, or old men not give counsel,* but that every

* Boswell translates this line by a couplet:

"Let youth in deeds, in counsel man engage:
Prayer is the proper duty of old age."[1]

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[1] Perhaps the meaning is—The achievements of the young, the counsels of the middle-aged, and the blessings (is not *εὐγη* a prayer for a blessing?) of the aged are best

season of life has its proper duties. I have thought of retiring and have talked of it to a friend: but I find my vocation is rather to active life." The very threat of his withdrawal from society forms a powerful argument against any institution that would have allured so great a benefactor of mankind to take such a step; though the love of retirement, as he tells us in the Rambler,* "has, in all ages, adhered closely to those minds which have been most enlarged by knowledge, or elevated by genius." No one could give better advice than his hermit gives to Obidah, the son of Abensena.†

This entry appears in his Diary, when traveling in France; "Monk not necessarily a priest. Benedictines rise at four, are at church an hour and a half; at church again half an hour before, half an hour after dinner; and again from half an hour after seven to eight. They may sleep eight hours. Bodily labor wanted in monasteries. The poor taken into hospitals and miserably kept. Monks in the convent, fifteen, accounted poor." It will be remembered, how he tells us in the "Rambler"‡ that monks are not necessarily poor; they are certainly free from destitution, and the reverence paid to the sanctity of their character amply compensates all other distinctions which might have been won in the worldly life.

Mrs. Piozzi records, "When we were at Rouen, he took a great fancy to the Abbé Roffette, with them he conversed about the destruction of the Order of the Jesuits, and condemned it loudly, as a blow to the general power of the church, and likely to be followed with many and dangerous innovations, which might at length become fatal to religion itself, and shake even the foundation of Christianity; and we are further told, that Dr. Johnson pronounced a long eulogium upon Milton, with so much ardor, eloquence, and ingenuity, that the Abbé rose from his seat and embraced him.

Yet neither Johnson nor the Abbé could have, in any wise, liked Milton's religious views. Johnson tells us, how "he had adopted the puritanical savageness of manners," and

* Rambler, No. 7. † Ibid. No. 65

‡ Ibid. No. 203.

"such is his malignity, that hell grows darker at his frown." He belonged to no church, had no stated hour of prayer, in public or private. At first he is said to have been Calvinistic; and when he began to hate the Presbyterians, he became Arminian. The Papists, because appealing to other testimonies than the Scripture, in his opinion, ought not to be permitted the liberty of either public or private worship: for though they plead conscience, "yet," he said, "we have no warrant to regard conscience which is not grounded in Scripture." We are reminded, by this enmity to Papists, of Prynne, the regicide, who actually made it a subject of serious accusation against the government, that he, when removed as a prisoner from Carnarvon Castle, was compelled to set sail in a ship on board of which was a Roman Catholic!

Great must have been their victory over prejudice, great their admiration of poetry's grandest hero, when the one could give, and the other applaud, so exalted a character and description of an ecclesiastical enemy. Milton, however, as Johnson has well stated, was not without full conviction of the truth of Christianity, and the profoundest veneration for the holy Scriptures, but the strange matter is, that the author of "Paradise Lost" should not have been a worshiper in the Cathedral (and he appears to have had a poetical feeling in favor of Cathedrals in earlier life), rather than the upholder of conventicle, and that his political predilections should not have been of the Stuart rather than the Cromwellian class.

Talking again of religious orders, he said, "It is as unreasonable for a man to go into a Carthusian convent for fear of being immoral, as for a man to cut off his hands for fear he should steal. *A man may do this,*" he says, "*yet he may all his life be a thief in his heart.* Their silence, too," he continued, "is absurd. We read in the Gospel of the Apostles being sent to preach, but not to hold their tongues. All severity that does not tend to increase good or prevent evil, is idle." In these remarks his strong common sense irresistibly breaks forth, and convinces.

He went on, "I said to the Lady Abbess of a convent,

'Madam, you are here, not for the love of virtue, but the fear of vice.' She said, she should remember this as long as she lived." Boswell thought it hard of him to give her this view of her situation, when she could not help it.

In the "Rambler" he discourses wisely:* "Austerity is the proper antidote to indulgence; the diseases of mind, as well as body, are cured by contraries, and to contraries we should readily have recourse, if we dreaded guilt as we dread pain. The completion and sum of repentance *is a change of life*. That sorrow which dictates no caution, that fear which does not quicken our escape, *that austerity which fails to rectify our affections*, are vain and unavailing."

Indeed, often an ascetic life may only tend to foster spiritual pride; ay, as much, or more, than platform applause, or congregational approval. In a book composed to exalt the merit of one set of monks, St. Peter is supposed to ask of St. Michael, who it is that knocks at the door; the answer is, "A Carmelite." "A Carmelite!" repeats St. Peter, peevishly; "a Carmelite! I think we have none at the gate of heaven but Carmelites, from morning to night. Well, he must stay; I shall not open the gate till there is a dozen together of them."†

But monks, like other men, must succumb to the common fate, and give in their strict account. In the celebrated "Daunce of Machabree, made by Dan John Lydgate, Monke

* That admirable paper, No. 110.

† Christini of Sweden is reported to have been never better pleased with a story, than that of a Normon curé's artifice to save the reputation of his seigneur, who had the misfortune to be broken alive on the wheel, at the "Greve," for two or three robberies, and a murder. "We pray thee, O Lord (said the ecclesiastic), for the soul of —— seigneur of this parish, who has lately died of his *wounds* at Paris."—*Andrewes*, p. 17.

In the cruel persecution of the Protestants at Aix (1614), the Jesuits promised an unhappy victim, overcome by the entreaties of his wife and family, that if he would recant, his life should be spared. The man complied, and yet they led him forth to death. On the scaffold he upbraided them with this breach of faith; but they told him, *that by the promise made him of life, they did not mean this life, but that to come.* —*Gentleman's Magazine*, vol. xvii. p. 396.

of St. Edmund's Bury," when Death comes, in due turn, to take away the monk, we read:

"Death speaketh to the Monke.

'Sir Monke also with your blâck habite,
Ye may no longer here hôld sojoure,
There is nothing here that may you respite,
Agein my might you for tò do succour.
Ye mot accompt touching your labour,
How you have spend it in dede, word and thought,
To earth and ashes turneth every floure,
The life of man is but a thing of nought.'

"The Monke maketh answer.

'I had lever in the cloyster be,
At my book and study my service,
Which is a place contemplatif to see:
But I have spent my life in merry wise,
Like as a fool dissolute and nice,
God of his mercy grant me repentance,
By chere outward hard is to devise,
All be not merry which that man see daunce.'"

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### MONASTICAL LIFE.

The eremitical life lays claim to great antiquity, and its followers were looked upon always as the most sainted sons of religion. St. Chrysostom tells us that the first institutor of monachism was Samuel, in the Old Testament; and St. Jerome, in his epistle to Rusticus, says, "The chief inventors and improvers of monachism were the sons of the prophets, in the Old Testament, who built huts near the river Jordon, and, quitting throngs and cities, lived upon barley cakes and wild herbs." And the same St. Jerome (a favorite Father with Presbyterians), writes, in his epistle to Paulinus, "We have the Apostles, Antony, Hilarion, and Macarius, for chiefs of our institute." Elijah and Elisha are also claimed as princes of the monastical life. So are the sons of Rechab, the Essenes, &c. And the MS. in the Cotton Library thus continues: "Having seen how it was represented under the Fathers of the Old Testament, it remains that we show how it was continued under those of the New. John the Baptist, who was between both the Testaments, flying * to the desert in his tender years, was the first institutor of monastical life under the New Testament. Nay, Christ himself was, properly, the institutor, when he ordered his disciples to sell all, to leave all things, and to follow him; and after his Ascension the faithful sold all they had, laid the price at the feet of the Apostles, and lived in common, under their care and direction, possessing nothing they could call their own.

"After the martyrdom of the Apostles, many falling off from their primitive fervor, began to seek the things of this world, and to possess them as their own, not in common, as before; but very many holy Fathers retaining that Apostolical fervor, and inspired by the Holy Ghost, continued to live

* Yet we have no evidence of this.

under the direction of one in community, adding many sublimer things to what had been practiced under the Apostles."

Eusebius, in the second book of his Church History, tells us how, by the example of St. Mark and the influence of his vast number of converts in Egypt, the holy monastical institute spread over all the world. Much more on this matter may be seen in Cassian, Sozomen, St. Jerome, and Epiphanius.

"The most renowned among these ancient monks," continues the MS., "were Antony, Hilarion, the two Macarii, Pachomius, Aurelius, John the Father of 3000 monks, Serapion the Father of 10,000, Dioscorus the Father of 100, Julian the Father of 10,000, Amos of 3000, Theonas of 3000, Paul of 500, Basil, Fructuosus, Ferreolus, Egyptius, Isidore, Aurelian, John Cassian, Jerome, and many more holy Fathers. At length succeeded St. Benedict, a strenuous hearer and fulfiller of the Evangelical precept, who shined out like a bright heavenly star; and he, about the year of our our Lord 516, was a resolute champion in Christ's warfare, in a monastery on Mount Cassino, and writ a commendable rule, approved of by the universal church, as Pope Innocent II. testifies." Previous to this date, at least nine eminent monks had written monastical rules.

Gregory of Nazianzen writes thus of the excessive austerity of the monks of Pontus: "Some torment themselves with chains of iron; others, shut up like wild beasts, in streight houses, see no man: they fast and keep silence twenty whole days. O CHRIST," he adds, "be favorable to those souls, who I confess are pious, but not discreet enough."

In England the original and advancement of Christianity and monachism was nearly contemporary. Some of the Druids, who were priests of that pagan religion, became monks; and their former life in its severity of discipline, inclined them to the monastic form of Christianity.

The monks of Glastonbury have endeavored to maintain the credit of a report, that in the year 31 after the Passion of our Lord, twelve of St. Philip the Apostle's disciples (chief of whom was Joseph of Arimathea*) came into this country

* See Dugdale's Monasticon.

and preached the Christian faith to Arviragus, who refused to embrace it, and yet granted them this place, with twelve hides of land: where they made walls of wattles, and erected the first church in this kingdom. These twelve, and their successors, continuing long the same number, and leading an eremetical life, converted a great multitude of pagans to the faith of Christ.

This report, however, is shown by Ussher, in his Latin work, and Stillingfleet, in his English work on the British churches, to have been first produced in the Norman times, during the eleventh century, and was therefore unknown to the Saxon kings who had previously favored the rising of this foundation. But though Joseph of Arimathea* was never at Glastonbury, it may be allowed that an ancient British church was there, as described by Sir Henry Spelman: and the antiquary Leland, with others, conjecture that some eremitical person named Joseph, with his companions, not only resided, but was interred there, and this circumstance led on to the story of the actual settlement and interment there of Joseph of Arimathea.

This church, we are told, was the sacred repository of the ashes of a multitude of saints, insomuch that no corner of it or of the church-yard is destitute of the same. In so great reverence was it held, that people would not so much as spit in the church-yard; and even from foreign countries the earth of this church-yard was sent for, to bury with the greatest persons. Here, as within the walls of Iona, should Johnson have trod.

The evidence in favor of St. Paul having preached the Gospel in Britain is very strong indeed, if not quite irrefragable: especially when we consider that both classical and ecclesiastical writers agree that Britain was spoken of as "the utmost bounds of the west." Be this as it may concerning St. Paul, it seems to be satisfactorily proved that the Church of England can trace, through its various gradations of the Tudor, Plantagenet, Norman, Anglo-Saxon, and British times, its origin upward to the Apostolic age.

* See "The Church of England, apostolical in its Origin," &c. By Rev. Thomas P. Pantin, M. A. Wertheim & Co. 1849.

The building of churches, the gifts of tithes by means of which we have now the Gospel without money and without price in the Church of England, the founding of monasteries, became in due time mighty examples of deep piety. "Certainly," says a writer, "the fasts of these days were frequent, the prayers earnest, and the alms remarkable."

At first these institutions were full of use to mankind, and without abuse. The style of living was poor and plain, while the labors were arduous. The rules said to have been prescribed to his monks, or canons, by St. Augustine, are all of a simple, self-denying character.* But we read, that these canons afterward growing wealthy, entirely fell off from their strict discipline, indulging themselves in worldly pomps and excess, which produced another sort of those who were called Canons Regulars, the others being called Secular, that is, Irregular, this making them decline so as to be almost lost: but they were again revived in the year of our Lord 1380.

Of the monks of Lanthony Abbey, we are informed, many lands were offered them, most of which they refused, choosing rather to live poor, than be involved in worldly solicitude: for the king and queen (Henry the First) pressing them to accept of the whole province of Bergelay, they with *earnest entreaties* prevailed to be excused from admitting of it.

The following was the form of receiving a Brother into the monastery.

"The first Petition in the Colloquium.†

"Syr—I besyche you and alle the Convent, for the Luffe of God, our Lady Sanct Marye, Sant John of Baptiste, and alle the hoyle Courte of hevyne, that Qe wold resave me, to live and dye here among you in the state of a Monke, as prebendarye and servant unto alle to the Honour of God, solace to the company, prouffet to the place, and helth unto my sawle.

* See Dugdale, vol. ii. p. 126. Also for sequent.

† From a MS. in the Cotton Library.

"The answer unto the Examinacyon.

"Syr—I tryste, through the helpe of God, and your good prayers, to keepe all the things, which ye have heyr rehersede.

"The fyrst peticyon before the profession.

"Syr—I have beyn heyr now this twell month near hand, and loyde be God, me lyks ryght well, both the order and the company; whereupon I besyche you and all the Company for the luffe of God, our Lady Sanct Marye, Sanct John of Baptist, and alle the hoyle company of hevyn, that ye will resave me unto my profession at my twell month day, according to my Petycion whyche I made when I was fyrst resaved heyr emongs you," &c.

The very able and prudent writer of the Preface to Dugdale's Monasticon, remarks, "The ancient structure and polity of our church is imperfect without the history of monasteries. The monks were formerly the greater part of the ecclesiastics, and the walls of convents were for a long time the fences of sanctity, and the better sort of literature. From that seminary came forth those mighty lights of the Christian world, Bede, Alcuinus, Willebrod, Boniface, and others worthy of much honor for their learning, and for propagating the faith. Were it not for monks, we had certainly ever been mere children in the history of our country." Again, he observes, "There are certain zealots so religiously mad, as to say that the Religious Orders of the *Gentils* proceeded from the bottomless pit. So licentious is inclination in indulging itself:" and he proceeds, "When the monks were rooted out by the Danish wars, an universal ignorance overspread the land, insomuch that there was scarce any one in England that could read or write Latin; but when by the care of King Edward and Archbishop Dunstan, monasteries were restored, learning found its former encouragement, and flourished very much within the walls of the cloisters. So that Leland, who was no great friend to the monks, often confesses that in those old times there were few or no writers but the monks." "Bayle, one of the bitterest enemies the monks ever

had, is forced to lament the great damage the learned world sustained at the dissolution of monasteries."*

We have before alluded to the ambition and rapaciousness of Henry the Eighth and his nobles, who, coveting the revenues of these institutions, destroyed instead of reforming them; and now, in these our days of the nineteenth century, with the vast increase of population, and consequent necessity of more churches and ministers, the church truly needs the redemption of her alienated property.

That prejudice has run out to its very utmost tether against the monks, must be allowed. Doubtless, great abuses crept in among them, but as doubtless also, their uses were vast.† Multitudes were converted, and continued in the Christian faith, by their exertions. The various arts of poetry, physic, and painting, as well as architecture in all its glory, were fostered by them. For the learning which we of the present time now enjoy, we are indebted greatly to them. For, in barbarous times, nowhere but in the libraries of the monks did the manuscripts of the Grecian and Roman authors find protection. Knowledge and science were contraband in the baronial hall. Agriculture owns them as its patrons to a vast extent. And what would the accuracy of Rapin, the penetration of Hume, or the genius of Lyttelton, have availed them in their historical labors, if monkish records had not been at hand? See the labors alone of the venerable Bede, his commentaries, his treatises, his religious biographies, his works on general history and chronology; above all, his

* In every great abbey there was a large room called the Scriptorium, to which belonged several writers, whose whole business it was to transcribe good books for the use of the public library of the house. We have now proofs of their vast industry and ingenuity.

† The monks long previous to the statute of Charles the Second, for the abolition of tenure in villeinage, had procured the manumission of this kind of slaves; for in Blackstone we read of Sir Thomas Smith's testimony, that "the holy fathers, monks, and friars, had in their confessions, and especially in their extreme and deadly sickness, *convinced the laity how dangerous a thing it was for one Christian man to hold another in bondage:* so that temporal men, by little and little, *by reason of that terror in their consciences*, were glad to manumit all their villeins."—*Commentaries on the Laws of England*, book ii. chap. 6, edit. 4to, 1766.

Ecclesiastical History of nearly two centuries and a half of a period the most important; and though we may not feel inclined to go so far as Macaulay in his assertion,* that "it is difficult to say whether England owes more to the Roman Catholic religion or to the Reformation:" yet with him, viewing the power of the priests as mental, and the priests themselves by far the wisest portion of society, we may agree, "that it was on the whole good that they should be respected and obeyed, and that their dominion in the Dark Ages had been, in spite of many abuses, a legitimate and a salutary guardianship." Then they exercised a power which "naturally and properly," as says Macaulay, "belongs to intellectual superiority," and their influence was a real blessing to "a society sunk in ignorance, and ruled by mere physical force;" but let it not for a moment be supposed, that we would seek at all to advocate the predominance of the sacerdotal over the civil power, in the present time, when superiority of intellect, or extent and profoundness of learning, in sciences theological and secular alike, reside with no peculiar body of sacred men, but are shared equally by all. No, in these pages, the union of the state with the church has been supported, which at once overthrows all idea of priestly or any other dominion, but that which is popular; and it may be held, that in Rome itself, the greatest blessing will be a representative form of government, similar, in great degree, to that which England enjoys with so much honor and moral integrity—certainly it will be well that the Pope and cardinals no longer arrogate to themselves the government of the Papal states.†

* Vol. i. p. 49. Macaulay's History of England.

† Johnson, in his tragedy of "Irene," has this passage

"Abdalla.

"Then seize fair Italy's delightful coast,
To fix your standard in imperial Rome.

"Mohammed.

"Her sons malicious clemency shall spare,
To form new legends, sanctify new crimes,
To canonize the slaves of superstition,
And fill the world with follies and impostures,
'Till angry Heaven shall mark them out for ruin,
And war o'erwhelm them in their dream of vice.

Notwithstanding abuses of the system, and they were many, we must give, in fairness, all honor to the benefits derived from the establishment of monasteries, in ages when learned men could only exist, and carry on their pursuits, under the protection and advantage of association. In his own "Journey" Dr. Johnson says, "It has been, for many years, popular to talk of the lazy devotion of the Romish clergy; over the sleepy laziness of men that erected churches, we may indulge our superiority *with a new triumph by comparing it with the fervid activity of those who suffer them to fall.*"

And mark the decay of religion with the fall of the monastery. Iona, once the abode of sanctity, is now left to the fruitfulness of its earth alone. "The inhabitants," observes Dr. Johnson, "are remarkably gross, and remarkably neglected; I know not if they are visited *by any minister*. The island, which was once the metropolis of learning and piety, *has now no school for education*, nor *temple for worship*, only two inhabitants that can speak English, and not *one that can write or read.*"

Both Mr. Boswell and himself were much affected at viewing the ruins of Iona, and he parted from the painful sight, with the consolation, that "perhaps, in the revolutions of the world, Iona may be some time again the instructress of the western regions."

Of Icolmkill, this extract from the "Journey" must be given. Speaking of the illustrious island, once the luminary of Scotland, bestowing the light of knowledge and religion on a savage and roving people, where to abstract the mind from all local emotion would be impossible, and to endeavor to do so, if possible, were foolish, he writes, "Whatever withdraws

> O could her fabled saints and boasted prayers
> Call forth her ancient heroes to the field,
> How should I joy, 'midst the fierce shock of nations,
> To cross the tow'rings of an equal soul,
> And bid the master genius rule the world."—*Act* iv. *Sc.* 2.

In the year 1849 "war has o'erwhelmed" a portion of them "in their dream of vice;" and another portion have emulated "her ancient heroes;" but as yet the infidel power, the Antichrist that denieth the Father and the Son (hence not Mohammedan) has not appeared.

us from the power of our senses, whatever makes the past, the distant, or the future predominate over the present, advances us in the dignity of thinking beings. Far from me and my friends be such frigid philosophy as may conduct us indifferent and unmoved over any ground which has been dignified by wisdom, bravery, or virtue. That man is little to be envied, whose patriotism would not gain force upon the plain of Marathon, or *whose piety would not grow warmer among the ruins of Iona.*" *

Monasteries can hardly be said to be needed in the present age, when we consider the large, though still inadequate, staff of pastoral clergy. Neither can nunneries be wanted, although many persons think that our Protestant church does not sufficiently shelter and solace the afflicted and lonely ones in the world, who might by associating together under certain rules, comfort one another in their pilgrimage, and be the means of edifying others. Of course the system of vows must be at an end, and young persons must not be shut out from natural scenes and delights; as Wordsworth says,

"It was a breezy hour of eve:
And pinnacle and spire
Quiver'd and seem'd almost to heave,
Clothed with innocuous fire;
But, where we stood, the setting sun
Show'd little of his state:
And, *if the glory reach'd the nun,*
*'Twas through an iron grate.*"

What do these last two lines not convey to our minds! No, we want Protestant Sisters of Mercy and Charity, living in their own homes, but going about doing good in these troubled yet hopeful times; persons of laborious piety, high-

* Hannah More, with lesser degree of zeal, says of a voyage down the Wye, "We deplored the ruthless hand of war, which had dismantled castles; and we contemplated abbeys, which the mouldering hand of time would have mellowed into more affecting beauty, had the zeal of reformation confined itself to opinions and principles, and not vented its undistinguishing fury on stone walls, and pillars, and windows."

In the preface to Izaak Walton's "Complete Angler," we have an account of the religious establishment of Mr. Nicholas Farrer, at Little Gidding, near Huntingdon; and such system could hardly be found fault with.

minded zeal, and self-denying devotion. We want, as it has been well hinted, witnesses every where, in every calling, in every grade; we want the good leaven, not retreating and hiding within sacred walls, but pervading all society, and giving to all its Christian tone. We want Christian duchesses, Christian gentlewomen, Christian officers, Christian lawyers, living in their own appointed and natural sphere, acting upon the bodies among whom they naturally move, and continuing in their position, as though they felt it to be providential, and had there to adorn the doctrine of God their Saviour.* These we want every where, not ladies who *condescend* to go among the poor, and talk in a fine way, but such as Mrs. Godolphin,† one of the noblest daughters of the English church, whose interior piety was profound, and her religious works unbounded. Goodness and righteous zeal, indeed, was to be expected from one, who could in gentleness and humility say, "Before I speake, Lord assist me: when I pray, Lord heare me; when I am praised, God humble me; may the clock, the candle, every thing I see, instruct me: Lord, cleanse my hands, lett my feete tread thy pathes." Thus we find her spending much of her time in "workeing for poore people," "spending much of her tyme, and no little of her money, in relieving, visiting, and enquireing of them out."

What an example in her for all district visitors! "I have already told," says Evelyn, "how diligently she would enquire out the poore and miserable, even in hospitals, humble cells, and cottages, while I have often accompanyed her, as farr as the very skirts and obscure places of the towne, among whom she not only gave liberall almes, but physitians and physick, she would send to some, yea, and administer remedyes herselfe, and the meanest offices. She would sit, and read, and instruct, and pray whole afternoones, and tooke care for their spiritual reliefe by procureing a minister of religion to prepare them for the Holy Sacrament, for which purpose she not only carry'd and gaue them bookes of salvation and devotion, but had herselfe collected diverse psalmes and chap-

* English Review, No. 16.

† See the Life of Mrs. Godolphin, by John Evelyn, edited by the Bishop of Oxford. Pickering.

ters proper to be read and used upon such occasions. Nor was home neglected, for of her servants it is said, 'she provided them bookes to read, prayers to use by themselves, and constantly instructed them herselfe in the principles of religion: tooke care for their due receiveing of the Holy Sacrament.'" Let women saintly and devoted as this blessed one abound in society, and much more the welfare of the poor and the uninstructed would be consulted, than by any encouragement of the cell, the cloister, and the vail.

Dr. Johnson spoke of the administration of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper in one kind only, and said, "They may think, in what is merely ritual, deviations from the primitive mode may be admitted on the ground of convenience." We should bear in mind, however, that this sacrament is not merely ritual; and that the Church of Rome regards not the giving the bread only to the laity as any deviation from the primitive mode, for they argue,* that although our blessed Lord said, *Unless ye shall eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, ye shall have no life in you.* He also said, *If any one shall eat of this bread, he shall live for ever:* and also that the converts of Jerusalem *were persevering in the doctrine of the Apostles, and in breaking of bread, and in prayer* (Acts ii. 42), also *on the first day of the week we were assembled to break bread.* (Acts xx. 7.) Thus they deem that they have Scriptural, and hence primitive authority for administering the Holy Sacrament in one kind only. But this "breaking of bread" was not the administration of the Eucharist, but simply a common participation of meals, taken in charitable communion and religious thankfulness, and followed by prayer.†

He said, "No reasoning Papist believes every article of their faith;" and after observing, that a good man of a timorous and credulous disposition, might be glad to be of a church where there are so many helps to get to heaven, he exclaimed, "I would be a Papist if I could. I have fear enough: but *an obstinate rationality prevents me.* I shall never be a Papist, unless on the near approach of death, of

* See Council of Trent, Sess. 21, c. 1.

† See Blomfield on Acts ii. 42.

which I have a very great terror! I wonder that women are not all Papists."

Boswell.—"They are not more afraid of death than men are."

Johnson.—"Because they are less wicked."

Dr. Adams.—"They are more pious."

Johnson.—"No, hang 'em they are not more pious. A wicked fellow is the most pious when he takes to it. He'll beat you all at piety."

On the same principle, one would suppose, that, as has been said, reformed rakes make the best husbands. Beware of that reed.

In the above conversation the substantial character of Dr. Johnson is apparent. He could not be blindly led. "An obstinate rationality prevents me;" or, in better words, a capacity for profound reasoning prevents my assent to a system which is not true. Herein was the bar to his ever becoming a Roman Catholic. Yet, because he would argue reasonably, not regarding the Church of Rome, with enthusiasts, as antichrist; and because his benevolent disposition never faltered toward Roman Catholics; therefore some would rashly conclude that he was too favorable to the Roman Catholic religion. He himself said, that old Mr. Langton, though a man of considerable learning, had so little allowance to make for his "laxity of talk, that because in course of discussion he sometimes mentioned what might be said in favor of the peculiar tenets of the Romish Church, he went to his grave believing him to be of that communion."

His "laxity of talk" sometimes took a contrary part. Boswell makes a record of an evening when he expressed himself strongly against the Roman Catholics, observing, "In every thing in which they differ from us, they are wrong."

On another occasion, when it was suggested that monuments should be erected in St. Paul's church to eminent individuals, and somebody proposed that the first should be to Pope, he said, "Why, sir, as Pope was a Roman Catholic, I would not have his to be first. I think Milton's should rather have the precedence."

Lady Knight says, after stating that his political principles

ran high in church and state, "I know he disliked absolute power: and I am very sure of his disapprobation of the doctrines of the church of Rome;" and she states that about three weeks before they set out for Rome, he said to her daughter, "You are going where the ostentatious pomp of church ceremonies attracts the imagination; but if they want to persuade you to change, you must remember, that by increasing your faith, you may be persuaded to become Turk."

To Mr. Barnard, who was going to Rome, he wrote a long letter, giving him sundry advice and caution, but concludes with what he considers the most important lesson of all. "You are going, he writes, "into a part of the world divided, as it is said, between bigotry and atheism: such representations are always hyperbolical, but there is certainly enough of both to alarm any mind solicitous for piety and truth: let not the contempt of superstition precipitate you into infidelity, or the horror of infidelity, ensnare you in superstition."

He was always kind to individuals. Toward Romanist as also Protestant priests he would ever havefelt, that "malevolence to the clergy is seldon at a great distance from irreverence of religion."* Though he has spoken against conversion *from* the Church of Rome, yet his kindness toward the Rev. Mr. Compton, one of the English Benedictine monks at Paris, was very great, after this priest had renounced the errors of the Church of Rome, which he was led on to do from perusal of the article in the "Rambler"† on repentance. He kept him at his house in London, supported him for upward of a year, and caused him to be introduced to the Bishop of London, also writing on his behalf to other parties; by which means he obtained preferment.

Dr. Johnson was told of a Mr. Chamberlayne, who gave up great prospects, and went over to the Church of Rome. He, who warmly admired every man who acted from a conscientious regard to principle, erroneous or not, exclaimed, fervently, "God bless him!"

Let us look faithfully into Dr. Johnson's religious conversation, and religious character, and we can not fail to agree

* Life of Dryden. † No. 110.

with Mrs. Piozzi, who says, "Though beloved by all his Roman Catholic acquaintance, yet was he a most *unshaken* CHURCH OF ENGLAND man." He was liberal and charitable to Roman Catholics, because he could see that they belonged to a fundamentally Christian, though corrupted church. He would therefore seek to win, rather than scold. He could not hold, with Bishop Newton, Mede, Benson, &c., that the Church of Rome was antichrist, but rather took the enlarged view of Horsley, Jones of Nayland, and our celebrated modern divines, Burton, Palmer, Arnold, Todd, Mill, Lee, and others of learned and investigating minds. And when once we can get what Arnold called "this nonsense, and more than nonsense" out of our heads, our hearts will naturally become more conciliatory and loving. Still, although the Roman Catholics must be aware that the charges heaped against them on this score are mere calumny and misrepresentation, yet, though conscious of innocence, such treatment, so often repeated, is difficult to bear. "If a man," said Boswell, in allusion to another circumstance, "endeavors to convince me that my wife, whom I love very much, and in whom I place great confidence, is a disagreeable woman, and is even unfaithful to me, I shall be very angry, for he is putting me in fear of being unhappy."

MURRAY.—"But, sir, truth will always bear an examination." JOHNSON.—"Yes, sir, but it is painful to be forced to defend it. Consider, sir, how should you like, though conscious of your innocence, to be tried before a jury for a capital crime, once a week."

We often see coarse and unscrupulous means of exciting the prejudices of the vulgar resorted to: and we have instances also of amiable minds being led thereby into acts of persecution. In Lord Hardwick's time, the idle reports that the tartaned and papistical Highlanders ate young children for supper, and that the butchers would be ruined by the observance of Lent, effected more with the mob than the determined speech he wrote for the king.* When Garrick engaged with Mr. Noverre to exhibit the Chinese Festival,† the pie-

* George the Second. Campbell's Lives of the Chancellors, vol. v. p. 100.

† Life of Garrick, vol. i. p. 180.

judice of the people was so strong against Frenchmen and Papists, that, notwithstanding the royal command, and even the presence of the king, the popular Garrick was forced to abandon it, after scenes of riot and bloodshed that will ever be memorable in theatrical annals. Let us recollect also the Gordon riots, serious indeed, although with many of the ruffians the cry of "No Popery" was interpreted to mean and effect "Much Pillage."*

"It is not only hard," observes a political writer,† "to distinguish between too little and too much, but between the good and evil intentions of the different Reformers. One man calls out 'Fire' that he may save the house, another, that he may run away with the furniture."

The same also says, "Whether men come honestly by their opinions or not, it is more advisable to refute than to burn, or even to scorch them." Dr. Johnson was of the same opinion. When standing on the ruins of the cathedral of St. Andrew's, he said, "Knox had set on a mob without knowing where it would end: and that differing from a man in doctrine was no reason why you should pull his house about his ears." Lord Halifax,‡ a statesman of great genius and capacious views in the time of William the Third, who disliked the bigotry of Churchman or Puritan, was always unable to comprehend how any man should object to saints' days and surplices, and how any man should persecute any other man for objecting to them. How charitably Jeremy Taylor says,§ "Because that a thing is not true, is not argument sufficient to conclude that he that believes it true is not to be endured."

Dr. Johnson's "poor Jack"‖ is hourly disturbed by the dread of Popery. Among other wild wanderings and wishes, he is rejoiced at the admission of Jews to the English privileges, *because he thought a Jew would never be a Papist.*

Poor Hannah More, when she wrote against Dissent, was

* See England under the House of Hanover, by T. Wright, Esq. M.A. F.S.A.

† Richard Sharp.

‡ See Macaulay's account of him, vol. i. p. 242, 243.

§ Liber. of Prophes. p. 355.

‖ Jack Sneaker, in the Idler, vol. i. No. 10.

accused of favoring Popery, and the old Popish massacres. Her very kindness was abused. One pamphlet "accused me" she says, "of opposing God's vengeance against Popery, by my *wickedly* wishing that the French priests should not be starved, when it was God's will that they should!" This good Protestant could rather say, "For my own part, reading as I almost every day do, a portion of Nicole, or some other good Jansenist, I can not but conceive heaven open to the conscientious Papist." "Nay, in that part of religion which comes under the name of devotion, *we* on our side should probably be at a loss to produce instances as numerous" (of sublime piety) "and as elevated as the Romish:" partly to be accounted for, she thinks, by their secluded habits and monastic lives, although she thought rightly, that we are not so much required to live *out* of the world as to live *above* it. She liked Protestantism best in its connection with the character and discipline of the Church of England, for she never could live in unison with those eager men who were for reforming reformation, and measuring religious advancement by the length of its departure from the practice of the Papal church."

Do we not here view, however differing in other respects, the very mind in her of Hooker and Dr. Johnson? all three agreeing with Jeremy Taylor, "There is nothing in the *foundation* of faith that can reasonably hinder them (Romanists) to be permitted; the foundation of faith stands secure enough for all their vain and unhandsome superstructures." It is against these latter that we can best, as well as most conscientiously contend.

"Three hundred years ago," says Peter Plymley * to his reverend brother Abraham, "men burnt and hanged each other for their opinions; time has softened Catholic as well as Protestant; they both required each; though each perceives only his own improvement, and is blind to that of the other. We are all the creatures of circumstances. I know not a kinder and better man than yourself; but you, if you had lived in those times, would certainly *have roasted your Cath-*

* Sidney Smith: Pamphlet, 11th edit. p. 17.

*olic.*" Alas! too many in the present time use language, which, if reduced to practice, would lead to the adoption of this art of human cookery.

A kindred mind,* in all but its facetiousness, said, "I wish very much to see before my death an image of a primitive Christian church. With little improvement, I think the Roman Catholic church of Ireland very capable of exhibiting that state of things." I can not think so. Would not the poor Episcopal church of Scotland be nearer the primitive pattern? He also said, "I think that a Catholic is a member of Christ's church just as much as I am, and I could well endure one form of that church in England and another in Ireland."

Although we may see the minds of high churchmen and liberals united on a certain point, we must not be led away with the idea that any real union of thinking exists between them generally. Dr. Johnson and Dr. Arnold—the antipodes! The former was always looking up to higher devotedness, higher discipline, Laud and his few, not Knox and his rabble; the latter was ever casting his eye of love abroad, thinking how to unite all, not favoring the Roman Catholic and taunting the Presbyterian, but imagining how he could bid them both shake hands; both regard only the handsome features in each other's countenances; both consent to the vesper chant and Puritan hymn under one and the same roof. How much of the former's religion we behold in his lines:

> "See, when the vulgar 'scapes, despised or awed,
> Rebellion's vengeful talons seize on Laud.
> From meaner minds, though smaller fines content,
> The plunder'd palace, or sequester'd rent;
> Mark'd out by dangerous parts, he meets the shock,
> And fatal learning leads him to the block;
> Around his tomb let Art and Genius weep,
> But hear his death, ye blockheads, hear and sleep.

and how much of the natural and fresh piety of the latter, in his admiration † of the lines of the Baron Von Canitz:

* A Fragment on the Church, by Thomas Arnold, D.D. 1844.

† See Notes to "Christian Life, its Course, its Hindrances, and its Helps," by Thomas Arnold, D.D.

"Only God's free gifts abuse not,
His light refuse not,
But still His Spirit's voice obey:
Soon shall joy thy brow be wreathing,
Splendor breathing
Fairer than the fairest day.

"If aught of care this morn oppress the,
To Him address thee,
Who, like the sun, *is good to all:*
He gilds the mountain-tops, the while
His gracious smile
Will on the humblest valley fall."

He loved to view religion every where; all places should be sacred. And though he disliked the idea of a priesthood, and could not bear to view "Christian religion profaned by antichristian fables; Christian holiness marred by superstition and uncharitableness; Christian wisdom and Christian sincerity scoffed at, reviled, and persecuted out of sight;" yet he thought "that in the Romish system there were many good institutions, and practices, and feelings, which it would be *most desirable* to restore among ourselves." He enumerates them as "daily church services; frequent communions; memorials of our Christian calling continually presented to our notice, in crosses and wayside oratories; commemorations of holy men of all times and countries; the doctrine of the communion of saints practically taught; religious orders, especially of women, of different kinds, and under different rules, delivered only from the snare and sin of perpetual vows*—all these, most of which are of some efficacy for good, even in a corrupt church, belong no less to the true church, *and would there be purely beneficial.*" †

Yes, these would be reforms, apart from the Pope and the domination of a priesthood, especially if the whole body of the clergy countenanced them. Arnold recognized the doctrine of the crown's supremacy, as "a rare and mere blessing of God," and there is no prospect of this blessing becoming void. But the clergy cry out against such things as are here recommended, as leanings to Popery, so perpetually is Protestantism bugbeared by her own confession of weakness.

* Introduction to the "Christian Life," &c., p. 56.

† See again Preface to Izaak Walton's Angler: vows not permitted.

Why can not she do the thing that is right, without fear of her people deserting her? There is something very pusillanimous and pettish in this harassing fear of the attraction of Popery. Let it be our constant aim to oppose the establishment of the Roman Catholic religion in this country: let us prove that the supremacy of the Pope and many of the Popish doctrines are without warrant from Holy Scripture; but never let us cease to elevate the devoutness of Protestantism, to place her in a primitive position, and by rejecting not the foundation points, but the novel superstructures of the Romanist belief, ever seek to show that the Church of England is a true branch of the Catholic church of Christianity. Dr. Johnson took the same line as afterward proposed by Dr. Arnold; both argued against the errors of the Romanist doctrine, both spoke in favor of the Romanist devotional practice. This may not be popular, for, as Leigh Hunt tells us of Henry the Eighth's time, "the monk then ceased to walk, and the gallant London apprentice became more riotous," so in the present day does this riotousness abound, much to the detriment of staidness of habit, and love of daily religion.

The young and gifted Kirke White, in an excellent letter to his brother James on the Services of the Church, speaking of Roman Catholics, thus kindly says: "There was once no other religion in the world; and we can not think that church very wicked, which God chose, once, to make the sole guardian of his truth. There have been many excellent and pious men among the Roman Catholics, even at the time their public faith was corrupted."

Persons who think and write thus are often exposed during their life-time to the taunt of having a leaning toward Popery; and thus they are made miserable, although they live and die true Protestants, and never cherished the remotest idea of turning to the Church of Rome. Of course the taunt proceeds from illiberal and narrow minds, but still it has its pain; although it betrays more fearfulness of becoming unsteady in those who make the charge, than in those who are its objects. We might give many instances, especially in recent time, in proof of liberality toward others being

quite consistent with the firmest maintenance of our own opinions; but let us choose an elder one, that of the judicious and modest author of the preface to Dugdale's Monasticon, who says, as though in anticipation of a like charge, "I humbly crave leave, before I advance any farther, publicly to profess myself to be a sincere, though very unworthy member of the Church of England, and that I have as true and hearty affection for her interest as perhaps any other person whatsoever. And yet I can not but here publicly declare, that I think it would have been more happy for her, as well as for the nation in general, had King Henry the VIIIth, only *reformed* and not *destroyed* the abbeys and other religious houses. Monastic institution is very ancient, and it had been very laudable, had he reduced the manner of worship to the *primitive form.* Popery, as I take it, signifies no more than the errors of the Church of Rome; had he therefore put a stop to those errors, he had acted *wisely*, and very much to the content of all truly good religious men."

Such men as these, it may be depended on, are the worthiest opponents of the Church of Rome, and most dreaded by her; such men can take up a strong position as members of the true Catholic church, and Rome knows well enough, that against a firmly compacted phalanx of such men, she can reasonably avail nothing, and that nothing can bring back power to her again, but some outrageous outbreak and increase of the sectaries, strong and rude enough to break down the bulwarks presented by her ancient, unwearied, and well instructed foe, the Church of England. The battle must be fought by the divines of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and on their basis alone, if permanence of success be desired; they have stood on ancient ground, plucked up the weeds, but retained all the plants of saving truth. Presbyterians, Brownists, Independents, as writes the Protestant Bramhall, have been Rome's best friends: "for certainly they have done you," addressing the Romanist M. de la Milletière, "more service in England than ever you could have done for yourselves."*

* See Bramhall's Works, vol. i. p. 36, of his Answer to M. de la Milletière.

In these days, as in other times, a man must be prepared to endure obliquy, or rather his aim will be exaggerated, when he endeavors to maintain what he believes to be the truth. "Is it not hard measure," asked Bishop Horne,* when a presbyter and accused of being a Hutchinsonian, "that when a clergyman only preaches the doctrines and enforces the duties of Christianity from the Scriptures, his character shall be blasted and himself rendered odious by the force of a name, which, in such cases, always signifies what the imposers please to mean, and the people to hate. There are many names of this kind now in vogue. If a man preaches Christ, that he is the end of the law, and the fullness of the Gospel: 'You need not mind him, he is a Hutchinsonian!' If he mentions the assistance and direction of the Holy Spirit, with the necessity of prayer, mortification, and the taking up of the Cross: 'Oh, he is a Methodist!' If he talks of the divine right of Episcopacy, with a word concerning the danger of schism: 'Just going over to Popery!' And if he preaches obedience to King George: 'You may depend upon it, he is a Pretender's man!'"

This is simply a portion of the imperfection of this lower world, and too often seen in men of really religious disposition, as though to signify that the heavenly treasure is deposited but in earthen vessels, and that there is consequently no perfection on this side the grave. *Growth in grace*, however, will destroy the accusing spirit in man, for then, as Cecil says, "there will be *more usefulness, and less noise;* more tenderness of conscience, and less scrupulosity: *there will be more peace, more humility:* when the full corn is in the ear, it bends down because it is full." Religion becomes too momentous a concern—we make it not a matter of mere nickname and wrangling.

* Jones's Life of Horne, p. 82.

## CHAPTER XIX.

### HIS SUPERSTITION.

Superstition is a too credulous belief in supernatural agencies and visions attendant on weakness of mind; it is a favoring of those secret apprehensions and horrors to which mankind are naturally prone. It is yet strange that some great minds have been subject to superstition. The ancient Greeks and Romans, learned and valiant, were especially so; and many heroic acts were performed, and many attempts at such prevented, through the appearance of the entrails of the beast* or bird in sacrifice, or by some ridiculous sign or manifestation. The effect of giving credence to such things, is either to render a man recklessly bold, or to make him timid, anxious, and desponding. We know how Alexander the Great became an abject victim of superstition. He turned the least incident into a sign or a prodigy. "The court," says Plutarch,† "swarmed with sacrificers, purifiers, and prognosticators; they were all to be seen exercising their talents there. So true is it, that though the disbelief of religion, and contempt of things divine, is a great evil; yet superstition is a greater." Plutarch, however, was not always of this opinion. He speaks more warily on another occasion.‡ For, after telling us of the miracles of olden time such as that images have often sweated; that they have

* When Sylla landed in Italy, he immediately sacrificed: and the liver of the victim had the plain impression of a crown of laurel, with two strings hanging down. Of course this was a most cheering omen.

When Alexander was marching toward Babylon, he heard that Apollodorus, its governor, had sacrificed, in order to consult the gods concerning him. Alexander sent for Pythagoras to ask him how the entrails of the victim appeared. Pythagoras answered, the liver was without a head. "A terrible presage, indeed!" said Alexander.

† Plutarch's Lives, vol. vi. p. 105.

‡ Ibid vol. ii. p. 56.

been heard to groan; and that sometimes they have turned from their votaries, and shut their eyes; he says, of the wonderful relations of his own times, "But to give entire credit to them, or altogether to disbelieve them, is equally dangerous, on account of human weakness. We keep not always within the bounds of reason, or are masters of our minds. Sometimes we fall into vain superstitions, and sometimes into an impious neglect of all religion. It is best to be cautious, and avoid extremes."

But not only in regard to war, but also in forensic matters, superstition held her sway. We have only to read the charming letters of Pliny, at once to perceive this. A friend writes to him to endeavor to put off the hearing of a cause, because he has had a dream signifying that he shall not be successful. Pliny promises to use his best efforts to do so, as he says,

"For dreams descend from Jove."

And he tells him,* that, in the mean while, it is very important that he should recollect whether his dreams have generally represented things as they afterward happened, or not; and he relates a case of his own, in which he won a cause pleaded before some of the most considerable lawyers of Rome, when his dream had told him that he should lose it.

But he even supported the more cruel fruits of superstition. The ancients believed that the ghosts of deceased persons were propitiated by the effusion of human blood. Pliny, therefore, tells his friend Maximus, that he was perfectly right in promising a combat of gladiators to the citizens of Verona, on the death of his excellent wife. "What other spectacle," he asks,† "could you have exhibited more proper to the occasion?" He tells him, that "the magnificent manner in which you executed the object of it, is much to your honor; for a greatness of soul is seen in these smaller instances, as well as in matters of higher moment;" and he only regrets that the African panthers, largely provided for the purpose, did not arrive in time.

* Pliny's Letters, book i. p. 42. † Book vi. p. 367.

He seems to think it an atoning circumstance in the life of the "liar" Regulus, that on the death of his son, he caused all the child's favorite little horses, dogs, parrots, blackbirds, and nightingales, to be slain around his funeral pile. Pliny's story, as related to him, of the haunted house at Athens,* is interesting; and, altogether, we must come to the determination that this eloquent, judicious, polite, and most amiable man, in common with most men of his age, possessed a mind tinctured, in more or less degree, as circumstances guided him, with such superstitious belief as proceeds from excess of reverential and tender feelings.

Not in heathen minds only has the love of superstition found a place, but in Christian also. The poetry of Prudentius shows us at what an early period (A. D. 400) the Cross was regarded with a kind of superstitious reverence. In his "Hymnus ante Somnum," he writes:

"Fac cum, vocante somno,
Castum petis cubile,
Frontem, locumque cordis
Crucis figura signet.
*Crux pellit omne crimen:*
Fugiunt crucem tenebræ;
Tali dicata signo,
Mens fluctuare nescit."

And we well know how the same measure of superstition still attaches to the Cross in the estimation of the Roman Catholic church; together with the numberless legends, charms, and fables, all ancillary to superstition, which have been invented or countenanced by the priests and monks of that church. We have merely to read their Lives of the Saints, at once to be convinced of this painful and degrading fact.

And not only among Roman Catholics, but with the Puritans and ultra-Protestants, the grossest delusions have found place. Witchcraft was solemnly believed. And so largely did this belief prevail among the party mentioned, that it drew the following trite censure from a Roman Catholic writer: "So great folly did then oppress the miserable world, that Christians believed greater absurdities, than could be imposed upon the heathens." Even the good Sir Matthew

* Book vii. p. 51.

Hale, though with doubt and fear, sentenced two women to death on a charge of witchcraft; and the credit of putting an end to this delusion belongs in England to Archbishop Harsnet, who was raised to the See of York by Charles the First, in the year 1628: at least, we may give him the credit; for although the judgment of Sir Matthew Hale was passed after this date, yet the wit and good sense of the archbishop really worked the gradual downfall of belief in witchcraft.

And more than in England, mark the horrible cruelties attendant on this absurd belief at Salem (now called Danvers) in the United States of America: in which tyrannical and hypocritical scenes Dr. Cotton Mather, to his eternal obloquy, took so conspicuous a part: and yet the doctor was a man actually credited by our own Baxter. During the prevalence of this fanaticism, we are told, twenty persons lost their lives by the hands of the executioner, fifty-five escaped death by confessing themselves guilty, one hundred and fifty were in prison, and more than two hundred others accused. *

And a belief in witches, fairies, and other singular beings, is still indulged by the common people. Addison says of our forefathers, "There was not a village in England that had not a ghost in it, the church-yards were all haunted, every large common had a circle of fairies belonging to it, and there was scarce a shepherd to be met with who had not seen a spirit." And in parts of England, in Ireland, Scotland, and the Isle of Man, the existence of witches and fairies, and the power of the evil eye, are fully credited, An extraordinary instance of this lately happened near the Clee Hill, in the county of Salop. A clergyman returning homeward one evening saw a wagon stuck fast by the road side. "Well, what is the matter?" "The horses can not stir it," replied the farmer, "it's bewitched." "Who has bewitched it?" asked the clergyman. "Why, sir, that old woman," naming a person known to him. The farmer and his man, when first seen, were actually both on their knees, with their coats turn-

* For an account of this delusion, and Dr. Mather's part in it, see "Ecclesiastical Reminiscences of the United States," by the Rev. Edward Waylen (Straker); a book abounding with interesting matter on the American church.

ed, in prayer that the spell might be removed, and were just about to send a gift to the old lady for that purpose: when, on the clergyman walking round the wagon, he found the wheel fast in the stump of a tree, the removal of which by an ax was his instant advice, and on went the wagon cheerily enough.*

Nearly about the same time (1849), a wagoner started from a farm-house with wagon and team, when lo and behold, before he had gone many yards the horses stood stock still, and nothing would induce them to stir, no allurements,

* There is a very good anecdote of a judge, who acquitted two women who were brought before him on a charge of "flying in the air," on the ground that there was no Act of Parliament to prevent it. This of course was done to discourage the belief in witchcraft. It is, I think, in the Gloucester Guide Books, for I believe the judge was Judge Powell, who lies in the Lady Chapel of Gloucester Cathedral.

The following handbill was actually exhibited is this century:

"Sold Here,
Price 1*s.* 6*d.* in cloth,
THE LIFE OF MRS. PALLISTER,
OF PRESTON, NEAR HULL,
Who was a consistent Member of the Wesleyan Methodist Connection upward of Fifty-six Years;
Comprising
A Faithful Account of the Celestial Phenomena which adorned her Shroud and Coffin;
Witnessed by Hundreds of Persons residing at Preston, Hedon, and the Neighborhood; and attested by the real Names and Professions of respectable Residents.

In this place in the middle of the placard is a view of this lying wonder. A number of persons are assembled to gaze upon the corpse in its shroud, on various parts of which are delineated objects like stars, throwing out rays in all directions: with a cross of considerable size on the breast, seemingly in a blaze of light. Query, Was the whole a fabrication of a rascally publisher, or the contrivance of an equally rascally hypocrite, who put phosphorus on the shroud? Either way, the speculation serves to show the hold of superstition, in ordinary minds, in the 19th century.

A Faithful Representation of the Wonderful Figures which rested upon the Shroud and Corpse of the late Mrs. Pallister, of Preston, near Hull, who was translated from Earth to Glory, Feb. 15, 1833, aged 76 years, and who was a consistent Member of Methodist Connection for 57 years.

From a Sketch taken on the Spot by Mr. F. Hustwick, of Hull.
London: Joseph Noble, 20, Giltspur-street; and Market-place, Hull."

no thrashings, could move them. The wagoner went back to tell his master that the horses were bewitched. The master replied, that it was a very bad job. A consultation was being held, when in came the boy running and breathless; he had discovered the cause; the bottle of drink was left behind!

Sir Walter Scott says of his country, that such spells are still believed in. A lady of property in Mull, a friend of his, had a few years since much difficulty in rescuing from the superstitious fury of the people, an old woman who used a charm to injure her neighbor's cattle. He had it in his possession, and it consisted of feathers, parings of nails, hair, and such like trash, wrapped in a lump of clay. Persons in rural districts in England commonly sell charms for the toothache and other pains; and a clergyman found, on one occasion, a young man who was nearly blind, and who practiced such things for gain, boiling herbs of all kinds on the fire below, while a poor woman was in child-labor in the room above, and every mystic syllable of incantation was to her mind more efficacious than the pastor's prayer.

In the Isle of Man this belief is entertained, and a singular trial took place in one of the courts lately, wherein the superstitious nature of the minds of some of the natives was largely and singularly revealed. There too they credit the existence of fairies, malignant and benignant. They have a tradition that witches can transform themselves into hares, and such hares can only be shot with a silver bullet. On the first of May they go out upon the hills in the evening, with great shouting and blowing of horns, to scare away the witches out of the furze and bushes. They have a prejudice against eating hares or eels. A few years ago, a young Englishman ordered a hare for dinner. The servant girl entertained the usual Manx horror against such animals. She would not even skin it herself. The young man, knowing her fears, was determined to play a trick. Just before the hare was served up, he managed to envelope it in some degree with spirits of wine. The poor girl brought it in, when on the moment of her depositing it on the table a bit of paper was lighted, and the hare suddenly became encompassed with

blue flames! The terror and utter consternation of the poor girl may well be imagined. The joke was far too practical; but she afterward confessed that she was justly punished, and would never meddle with a hare again!

"A Manxman," says Robertson,* "amid his lonely mountains, reclines by some romantic stream, the murmurings of which lull him into a pleasing torpor. Half slumbering, he sees a variety of imaginary beings which he believes to be real. Sometimes they resemble his traditionary ideas of fairies, and sometimes they assume the appearance of his friends and neighbors. Presuming on these dreams, the Manx enthusiast predicts some future event; and should any thing similar occur, he fancies himself endowed with the gift of prescience, and thus disturbs his own happiness and that of others." The same author, observing on the sombrous melancholy produced by solitude on an inert disposition, says, "Hence, it seems, there are many who labor under a disordered imagination in this island; and who, from their native disposition, giving way to religious terrors, imbibe all the gloomy tenets of Methodism." Be this as it may, there are many wise, cheerful, enlightened families on the Isle of Man, and its modern Methodism is far removed from that ascetic character which once it assumed, although some of the elder kind of Methodists may still be found, who, for instance, would not eat a morsel of food on a Sacrament Sunday, until after they had partaken of the Holy Supper in the church.

But let us come to what may be called Dr. Johnson's superstitions. It was his care to go in or out at a door or passage, by a certain number of steps from a certain point, or at least so that either his right or his left foot (it was not known which) should constantly make the first actual movement when he came close to the door or passage. When he had gone wrong, in order to achieve this, he would sometimes go back again, and measure his distance with more care. In walking over a paved quadrangle, he would not step on the juncture of the stones, but carefully in the centre;

* Tour through the Isle of Man, by David Robertson, Esq., in 1791.

and in walking up an accustomed footway, he would always place his hand on the top of the centre posts, and if he omitted one, he would go back and amend his omission. There is nothing particular to be noticed in this habit; very many persons do the same kind of thing from an orderly, methodical manner into which they have got, and especially have a trick of counting certain numbers, even or uneven, over and over again; or counting trees, animals, furniture in a room, &c., until they leave off at a favorite number. It is merely a harmless habit, which a little reasoning with one's self would soon correct, but which may become annoying by its increasing consumption of time.

On the question, however, concerning ghosts and apparitions, much more must be said; though Dr. Johnson did not positively believe in either. He states fairly the belief of the credulous, in his *Rasselas*. The prince says, "If all your fear be of apparitions, I will promise you safety: there is no danger from the dead: he that is once buried will be seen no more."

"That the dead are seen no more," replied Tinlac, "I will not undertake to maintain against the concurrent and unvaried testimony of all ages, and of all nations. There is no people, rude or learned, among whom apparitions of the dead are not related and believed." In this saying of Tinlac we must suppose Johnson's opinion to be mainly embodied, although it may not be correct as applied (nor would he probably apply it thus) to *all* individuals of all nations, for it is materially softened by his opinions subsequently delivered.

For on one occasion, when Mrs. Williams was telling him a story of second-sight which had happened in Wales, and he had said that he should like to have some instances of that faculty well authenticated, he further observed, "that we could have no certainty of the truth of supernatural appearances, unless something was told us which we could not know by ordinary means, or something done which could not be done but by supernatural power; that Pharaoh in reason and justice required such evidence from Moses; nay, that our Saviour said, 'If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin.'"

We must bear in mind that Johnson loved an argument, and especially aimed to detect its fallacy; therefore, because he sometimes refutes the reasoning of a disbeliever in ghosts, we must not rush to the conclusion that he himself believed in them. Boswell once said to him, "There is this objection made against the truth of ghosts appearing; that if they are in a state of happiness, it would be a punishment to them to return to this world; and if they are in a state of misery, it would be giving them a respite." Johnson replied, "Why, sir, as the happiness or misery of embodied spirits (he must mean disembodied) does not depend upon place, but is intellectual, we can not say that they are less happy or less miserable, by appearing upon earth." He might have reminded Boswell, that departed spirits have not yet reached their final destiny, and thus his idea would be strengthened, that their visits to this earth might be so ordered by the Disposer of all events, as neither to diminish their happiness or woe. Probably this is intimated, although not positively stated.

Croker is very earnest in his observations against the appearances of ghosts, and insists that there is no satisfactory evidence of their appearance. Johnson, talking of ghosts, said, that he knew one friend, who was an honest and sensible man, who told him he had seen a ghost—old Mr. Cave, the printer, at St. John's Gate. He said Mr. Cave did not like to talk of it, and seemed to be in great horror whenever it was mentioned. Boswell asked, "Pray, sir, what did he say was the appearance?" Johnson answered, "Why, sir, something of a shadowy being."

Johnson repeated this at another time, and also Goldsmith said, that he was assured by his brother, the Rev. Mr. Goldsmith, that he had seen one. The story of the ghost of the notorious Parson Ford having appeared is also related, but certainly we have no substantial evidence in either of these cases.

Of the power of the *second-sight* some strong instances were related to Dr. Johnson. M'Quarrie, an ancient Scottish chieftain, intelligent, polite, and much a man of the world, told him, that he had gone to Edinburgh, and taken a man-servant along with him. An old woman who was in the house said one day, "M'Quarrie will be at home to-morrow.

and will bring two gentlemen with him:" and she said she saw his servant return in red and green. He did come home next day. He had two gentlemen with him, and his servant had a new red and green livery, which M'Quarrie had bought for him at Edinburgh, upon a sudden thought, not having the least intention when he left home to put his servant in livery: so that the old woman could not have heard any previous mention of it.

Johnson had many temptations to believe in ghosts and apparitions, and he would, in common with us all, have gladly done so, but he never could get the requisite evidence, and, unlike John Wesley, he must have that clear and undoubted. I say, in common with us all, for who would not like the privilege of a visit from a departed friend: and who need feel terror even from the ghost of a wicked man? How despairingly, yet longingly, the poet cries,

> "I look for ghosts: but none will force
> Their way to me—'tis falsely said,
> That there was ever intercourse
> Between the living and the dead:
> For surely then I should have sight
> Of him I wait for day and night,
> With love and longings infinite!"

How beautifully doth Crabbe apostrophize:

> "Dear, happy shade! companion of the good,
> The just, the pure, do I on thee intrude?
> Art not thou come my spirit to improve,
> To form, instruct, and fit me for thy love:
> And, as in love we parted, to restore
> The blessing lost, and then to part no more?"

Oh, may we not say, that such a blessing as this would serve too much to reconcile us to the present life; for what can stimulate more our longing to depart, than, after union with Christ, the hope that union with former friends is one of the chief happinesses of heaven. No, perhaps we dare not go beyond the source of Southey's consolation:

> "Meantime I soothe
> The deep regret of nature, with belief,
> O Edmund! that thine eye's celestial ken
> Pervades me now, marking with no mean joy,
> The movements of a heart that loved thee well."

Let us only assure ourselves of this belief, this union and sympathy of departed ones, and how much alleviation of intensest sorrow is gained.

Johnson, we say, had temptations to believe in ghosts and apparitions; first from the seeming authenticity of some stories related to him: secondly, from the belief of other persons, especially of Boswell, who said of Johnson, "*He* is only *willing* to believe; I *do* believe: and thirdly, from the desire of his own mind, accustomed as it was to hold in constant view the Christian doctrines connected with supernatural belief. Thus, of apparitions he observed, "A total disbelief of them *is adverse to the opinion of the existence of the soul between death and the last day;* the question simply is, whether departed spirits ever have the power of making themselves perceptible to us: a man who thinks he has seen an apparition can only be convinced himself; his authority will not convince another: and his conviction, if rational, must be founded on being told something which can not be known but by supernatural means."

When Lord Lyttelton's vision, the prediction of the time of his death, with its exact fulfillment, was mentioned, he said, "It is the most extraordinary thing that has happened in my day. I heard it with my own ears, from his uncle, Lord Westcote. *I am so glad to have every evidence of the spiritual world, that I am willing to believe it.*" *

Here we have the main reason for his minute and constant inquiries into the evidence for the appearance of ghosts, and for the authenticity of the second-sight in Scotland. Yet

* Johnson, in his Life of the Earl of Roscommon, after relating how the earl, when a boy, in the middle of his play at Caen, in Normandy, cried out, "My father is dead," and his words proved to be true: says, "Here is the relation of a fact given by a man (Mr. Knolles) who had no interest to deceive, and who could not be deceived himself; and here is, on the other hand, a miracle which produces no effect. The order of nature is interrupted to discover not a future, but only a distant event, the knowledge of which is of no use to him to whom it is revealed. Between these difficulties what way shall be found? Is reason or testimony to be rejected? I believe what Osborne says of an appearance of sanctity may be applied to such impulses or anticipations as this: *Do not wholly slight them, because they may be true; but do not easily trust them, because they may be false.*"

what was the result? With all the willingness to believe, he never could obtain sufficient evidence. After visiting a people remarkable for their implicit belief in these things, and with many instances adduced before him, he still says,* as the end of his Scottish inquiries, "Strong reasons for incredulity will readily occur. This faculty of seeing things out of sight is local, and commonly useless. It is a breach of the common order of things, without any visible reason, or perceptible benefit. It is ascribed only to a people very little enlightened: and among them, for the most part, to the mean and ignorant." Again, "There is against it, the seeming analogy of things confusedly seen, and little understood: and for it, the indistinct cry of national persuasion, which may be perhaps resolved at last into prejudice and tradition. *I never could advance my curiosity to conviction: but came away at last only willing to believe.*" This, be it recollected, is not Boswell's reporting; these words are from his own Journal: and therefore, the idle charge of superstition, as it has been advanced against him, is totally unfounded. Had he ever been inclined to superstition, then was the time for its indulgence.

In this same "Journal," he also says, that the boatmen expected no good event of one of his voyages, for one of them declared he heard the cry of an English ghost. "This omen I was not told till after our return, *and therefore can not claim the dignity of despising it.*"

His language in England always was directed to the effect that the matter was undecided. When talking of Wesley's credulity about the Newcastle ghost, he said, "Charles, who is a more stationary man, does not believe the story. I am sorry that John did not take more pains to inquire into the evidence for it." Miss Seward (with an incredulous smile): "What, sir! about a ghost?" "Yes, madam," replied Johnson; "this is a question which after five thousand years is yet undecided; a question, whether in theology or philosophy, one of the most important that can come before the human understanding." It is important, inasmuch as men would have ocular demonstration of the truth of a future life;

* In his own Journal, p. 252.

but we are assured that we have sufficient evidence, without a fulfillment of the rich man's request to Abraham. Johnson never could bear flippancy of either thought or speech; sometimes he liked to establish a paradox; at all events he would magnify the importance of a matter before one who seemed willing to dismiss it as unworthy of any investigation or reflection at all. At another time he repeated nearly the same words, with this addition, "All argument is against it," against the appearance of the spirit of any person after death —"but all belief is for it."

He expressed great indignation at the imposture of the Cock-lane ghost, and related, with much satisfaction, how he had assisted in the detection of the cheat, in which Dr. Douglas, the Bishop of Salisbury, and great detector of impostures, aided him. He was very angry also with Lord Kames, for misrepresenting Clarendon's account of the appearance of Sir George Villiers's ghost, as if Clarendon were weakly credulous; when the fact is, that Clarendon only says that the story was upon a better foundation of credit than usually such discourses are founded upon.

Another conversation discloses Dr. Johnson's caution. When speaking of belief in ghosts, he said, "Sir, I make a distinction between what a man may experience by the mere strength of his imagination, *and what imagination can not possibly produce.* Thus, suppose I should think that I saw a form, and heard a voice cry, 'Johnson, you are a very wicked fellow, and unless you repent you will certainly be punished;' my own unworthiness is so deeply impressed upon my mind, that I might *imagine* I thus saw and heard, and therefore *I should not believe that an external communication had been made to me.* But if a form should appear, and a voice should tell me that a particular man had died at a particular place and a particular hour, a fact which I had no apprehension of, nor any means of knowing, and this fact, with all its circumstances, should afterward be unquestionably proved, I should in that case be persuaded that I had supernatural intelligence imparted to me."

Dr. Johnson draws a right distinction here. Physicians will tell us how much the theory of apparitions, spectral

illusions, and supernatural voices, depends upon a disordered imagination, in which things past are confounded with those that are present. "A person of vivid conception," says Dr. George Moore,* "may persuade himself out of his senses, merely because his mind is too intently occupied to allow him properly to employ them. Distinct perception requires attention and the adjustment of the organs of sense; but the mind that is too active can not attend. Of course therefore the faculty of comparison is so far suspended; and as by this faculty we distinguish ideas from realities, and object from object, *a thing imagined must, under these circumstances, have all the force of a reality.* Poets and lunatics respectively exemplify this remark. An imagination that deludes us by the strength of remembered impressions is poetical, when transient and manageable, but when uncontrollable and permanent, it is madness."

We know well enough that our minds, by an act of voluntary recollection, can set before us the appearance in face and form, and dress, of those who are absent; and sometimes this appearance reproduced by the mind will so obtrude itself on the bodily sense, as to make us actually behold the recollected person as though walking, as it were, by our side. Then we think we see an apparition, although such appearance is created only by disorder of the mind, which suspends the power of the senses. Dr. Hibbert mentions the case of a gentleman, who, having been told of the sudden death of a friend, saw him distinctly when he walked out in the evening. He was not in his usual dress, but in a coat of a different color, which he had left off wearing for some months. His friend could even remark a figured vest which he had worn about the same time, also a colored silk handkerchief around his neck, in which he had used to see him in the morning. Thus he beheld him, not dressed, as he might have been, at the time of his death, but as he had been accustomed to see him months before. And often a number of men if strong impressions have been made on their minds, and prepossessed their wills, may imagine that they

* The Power of the Soul over the Body, by George Moore, M.D.

together behold the form of a departed one. A whole ship's crew were thrown into consternation by the ghost of the cook who had died a few days before. He was distinctly seen by them all, walking on the water with a peculiar gait by which he was distinguished, one of his legs being shorter than another. The cook, so plainly recognized, was only a piece of old wreck.*

* So much influence also has the state of the body over the mind, that often physical disease leads to mental wandering. A Fellow of a College in Oxford used to be terrified by the appearance of a bloody head presented before his eyes. He consulted a physician, by whom he was bled: and medicine being administered, he lost sight of the spectre for a while. But it returned; and at last, the man having found out the cause of this appearance, namely, a flow of blood to his own head, whenever it occurred always resorted to bleeding. As the blood departed from his veins, so the image of the bloody head vanished.

A story may be related here, to show how readily some persons are inclined to superstition. In the Life of Mrs. Fletcher, of Madeley (p. 363), we find the following entry in her journal: "The other day brother Tranter preached in my room very profitably, and told us afterward a remarkable answer to prayer. Mr. R. Crowther and his wife were going to their circuit in a borrowed gig. They came to the house of a pious man and woman, accustomed to receive the messengers of Jesus Christ. There were some persecuting spirits in the place. In the night, the man and his wife found they could not sleep, and said one to the other, 'I feel a great weight on my mind, *perhaps some hurt is doing to the gig.*' They got up and went out. They found one wheel was gone. They looked all about, but could not find it. They returned into the house, and went to prayers, laying before the Lord the difficulty Mr. Crowther would be in. At last one of them said, '*It comes to my mind* they have carried it to such a place (about two miles off) and thrown it into the swamp.' The other said, 'Let us go and see.' About one o'clock they set off. When they came to the place, which was full of water and mud, and covered with rushes, they looked about, but could see nothing of the wheel. They then saw a large stick; upon which the man said, 'Perhaps on this stick they carried it; let us try again.' He then took up the stick and groped in the mud. Presently he felt the wheel. They got it out, brought it home, and put it on to the gig."

The above is set off as a miracle! but sober persons will see nothing in it beyond natural sense and action. The man could not sleep, which is often the case after the excitement of preaching, for the brain becomes heated. They knew that persons probably would like to play them a trick. The only portion of their property exposed was the gig;

Be not superstitious, but believing. Johnson could not argue himself into cognizance of a ghost; yet he could say that all belief was on its side. Wise and discreet modern writers have asserted their belief in the possibility of the existence of ghosts and spirits, and their belief has been the more firmly grounded because they have known how to separate and distinguish the real truth of the matter from the countless counterfeits that surround it. "To pull the old woman out of our hearts," as Persius expresses it, is absolutely necessary in order to substantiate that belief in the appearance of ghosts which is consistent with the dictates of reason and religion. It is not because an old withered oak bough, illumined by the whitening moonbeam, has been taken for a ghost, and scared the country people from a certain footpath, and then has been found out to be only the bough after all, that therefore our faith should be turned aside from the real appearance; or because villages have been frightened by a white sheet, therefore the reality should cease with the imposture. There may be the real thing after all, and in our common belief of religion, we credit far harder matters than this. "For my own part," writes the wise and cautious Addison, "I am apt to join in opinion with those who believe that all the regions of nature swarm with spirits; and that we have multitudes of spectators in all our actions, when we think ourselves most alone. But, instead of terrifying myself with such a notion, I am wonderfully pleased to think that I am always engaged with such an innumerable society, in searching out the wonders of creation, and joining in the same concert of praise and adoration."

Milton has finely described this mixed communion of men and spirits in Paradise; and had, doubtless, his eye upon a

hence their first thoughts were turned to it. They get up, and find the wheel gone. The well-known swamp is the most probable place of its destination. This occurs to them. They find a large stick, the very thing suited to carrying off the wheel. On this evidence, they of course search the mud and find the wheel. There might be a very offensive conceit in calling this a miracle, though, doubtless, it may have been the innocent belief of a superstitious mind.

verse in old Hesiod, which is almost, word for word, the same with his third line in the following passage:

> "Nor think though men were none,
> That Heaven would want spectators, God want praise:
> Millions of spiritual creatures walk the earth,
> Unseen, both when we wake and when we sleep:
> All these with ceaseless praise his works behold,
> Both day and night."

Now, if spirits of any kind be around us, as we have Scriptural reason to believe that angels actually are, why should not those that have left human bodies be permitted to be present? Angels have been seen on the earth—we see them not now; spirits have been recalled from Paradise, and reunited to human bodies, though there be no necessity now of such miracle: the matter seems to narrow itself into the question, simply, *whether the human eye is allowed at any time to behold a spirit?* for we may acknowledge the possibility or probability of the presence of departed spirits, and yet deny the permission of seeing them.

A writer of modern date (1814), who has collected a number of stories of ghosts and hobgoblins, &c., which he proves to be of human fabrication, and the intention of whose book is to put weak and superstitious people on their guard, makes this serious statement in his Preface: "Though I candidly acknowledge to have received great pleasure in forming the collection, I would by no means wish it to be imagined that I am skeptical in my opinions, or entirely disbelieve and set my face against all apparitional record. No; I do believe that, for certain purposes, and on certain and all-wise occasions, such things *are*, and *have* been permitted by the Almighty; but by no means do I believe they are suffered to appear half so frequently as our modern ghost-mongers manufacture them." These are the words of an unprejudiced mind in the cause; or if prejudice did exist, it would seem to have been such as militated against belief of this supernatural exhibition. He says again, in another part of his work: "There are some who are ghost-mad, and terrify themselves, because the Scripture has mentioned the appearance of ghosts. I shall not dispute, but, by the power of

God, an incorporeal being may be visible to human eyes: but then, an all-wise Providence would not have recourse to a preternatural effect but on some important occasion."

With the knowledge that persons may certainly be deceived by visions, there is a difficulty in a man's obtaining credit for having seen a ghost, let the evidence to himself be ever so irrefragable. For this, and other plain reasons, it must be very wicked to personate a ghost. It is a solemn matter. Job saw a spirit; there is the account of the witch of Endor; and at our Lord's resurrection, the bodies of saints came out of the graves, and their spirits became reunited with them. This latter instance is recorded by one Evangelist only; but there is no evading it, for it is in all the ancient MSS. Whether they remained on earth, or ascended with our Lord, and are alluded to as "the just men made perfect," is quite immaterial.

Whatever our own opinions may be, it is a "foolish notion," as Boswell says, to suppose that Johnson was weakly credulous on this subject of the appearance of departed spirits. Johnson was not superstitious. The article in the "Rambler" on Superstition and Religion (No. 44) proves this: for although it was not written by Johnson himself, but by Mrs. Carter, it met with his high approbation. Mrs. Piozzi says, "The papers contributed by Mrs. Carter had much of Johnson's esteem, though he always blamed me for preferring the letter, signed Chariossa (No. 100), to *the allegory* (No. 44), where religion and superstition are indeed masterly delineated." Mrs. Carter was a woman of superior talent, of high church principles, and the friend of Hannah Moore.

The matter may be concluded with the observation, that although we may have no sufficient human testimony in the affirmative, yet that we have Scriptural proof of the reappearance of departed spirits on the earth: and no considerate man can say, that it may not please God, for some beneficent purpose, to exert this power on fitting occasions, again and again.

## CHAPTER XX.

### EPITAPHS.

The writing of Epitaphs is an ancient and a good custom. It serves to perpetuate the memory of the departed, to instruct the living, and to fill us with a desire of posthumous fame, of at least a local character. Let us cordially agree in the sentiment of the Roman poet,

"Et tumulum facite, et tumulo superaddite carmen."

"It is hard to make an epitaph," writes Dr. Johnson to David Garrick: and when a man tells us of the difficulty in doing a thing, or taunts us with the easiness of finding fault, we like to see that man putting us in the right way. Now, this Dr. Johnson has done; for he has deliberately written an Essay on Epitaphs, wherein he finds fault with some of this kind of inscriptions, and gives praise to others.

That the tomb of the good man should somewhat serve to supply the want of his presence is, in his view, the first intention of epitaphs: and those epitaphs are most perfect which set virtue in the strongest light. At the same time, it is the sort of mediocre class of men whose memories require the longest and most studied epitaphs,* while the first-

* Dr. Watts commemorated Mather in an epitaph of not less than one hundred and eleven lines! even including "the tallness of his stature" among the good qualities of the deceased. Wesley's epitaph is quite a vain work. Lord Lyttelton, who would have no epitaph on his own tombstone, wrote a long one for the monument of Sir James Macdonald; and in the 17th and 18th centuries, the epitaphs on divines (especially these by Dr. Friend) are noted for their diffusiveness. Burke was rather in favor of long epitaphs; for, he said, "every thing short is apt to be general, and as well fitted for one great public man as another."

Dr. Burney tells us, that Johnson said, "The writer of an epitaph should not be considered as saying nothing but what is strictly true. Allowance must be made for some degree of exaggerated praise." His idea of the duties of a biographer may illustrate what he means.

rate heroes, military, literary, or scientific, need have but their names inscribed, and all that has made those names immortal is at once recognized. SHAKSPEARE, MILTON, SIR ISAAC NEWTON, MARLBOROUGH, demand no long tale to tell you who they were. This simplicity will not do for the tombs of men "raised to reputation by accident or caprice," or the inscription will soon require an interpreter, and, perhaps, as effectually as curiously, puzzle the prying ones of posterity. Next in dignity to the bare name, is a short character, simple and unadorned, such as, ISAACUS NEWTONUS, *Naturæ Legibus investigatis, hic quiescit.**

"If a man," he said, "is to write a *Panegyric*, he may keep vices out of sight; but if he professes to write a *Life*, he must represent it really as it was."

In the *Gentleman's Magazine* for 1756, p. 382, &c. there is an article on a new species of epitaphs: in which it is proposed that the ages of deceased persons should be reckoned according to the manner in which they have improved or abused the time allotted them in their lives. For instance, "Here lies Isaac Da Costa, a convert from Judaism, aged sixty-four. He was born and christened in his sixty-first year, and died in the true faith in the third year of his age."

* See *Gentleman's Magazine*, 1740, p. 594. The couplet on Sir Isaac Newton may be mentioned here, however well known:

"Nature and Nature's laws lay hid in night,
God said, 'Let Newton be!' and all was light!"

In the chapel of Trinity College, Cambridge, stands, as you enter the vestibule, a very fine statue of Isaac Newton, by Roubillac, with the following line on the pedestal,

"Qui genus humanum ingenio superavit."

In the same place is a monument to the memory of Roger Cotes, of Trinity College, a celebrated mathematician, who died young; but young as he was, he bid fair to approach nearer to Newton than any other English mathematician. His epitaph is short, written by Beattey in his happiest style; this the conclusion, and we mark the beauty and force of the repetition in the last line,

"Pauca quidem sui Ingenii, Pignora reliquit,
Sed egregia, sed admiranda!"

Some of the Roman epitaphs were very short. This is Ovid's; and it fulfills Dr. Johnson's idea:

"Ovidianus . Poeta . hic . quiescit."

Many of them are remarkable for their pathos and simplicity, chiefly on the death of children and near relations. Here is one:

"D. M. S.

"Plætoriæ . Antiochidæ . Rarissimæ Fœminæ . vix . ann . XXVI.

Dr. Johnson thought rightly that we should "exclude from our epitaphs all such allusions as are contrary to the doctrines for the propagation of which the churches are erected:" hence the epitaph on Cowley, wherein the divinities (Muses) that favored him in life are besought to watch over his tomb, he condemned as "uninstructive and unaffecting," as "too ludicrous for reverence or grief, for Christianity and a temple." The designs and decorations, also, of monuments ought to be in strict character with the solemnity of the place: hence it is not easy "to imagine a greater absurdity than that of gracing the walls of a Christian temple with the figure of Mars leading a hero to battle, or Cupids sporting round a virgin."

He gives us two Greek inscriptions as a pattern; and in his remarks on these we discover his usual non-respect of persons, and his regard for that sentiment which animated his own course, showing, that "virtue is impracticable in no condition" of poverty, of affliction, of slavery.

Of Christian epitaphs, he thought that the well-known one—

"Orate pro anima—miserrimi peccatoris."

was an address to the last degree striking and solemn, as it flowed naturally from the religion *then believed*, and awakened in the reader sentiments of benevolence for the deceased, and of concern for his own happiness. There was nothing trifling or ludicrous, nothing that did not tend to the noblest end, the propagation of piety and the increase of devotion." Certainly persons in these "more enlightened times" have written more ridiculous and absurd epitaphs than ever were produced in the monkish ages, "however ignorant and unpolished." Sometimes they are made to assume an epigrammatic turn; and however brevity is to be commended, surely a smart saying is to be carefully avoided.

Dr. Johnson himself wrote several epitaphs. The one on

M.III . D.XXI . T. Fl. Capito . Cojugi . Castissimæ . Piissimæ . et . de . se . optime . meritæ . de . qua . nullum . dolorem . nisi . acerbissimæ . ejus . mortis . acceperat . dignissimæ . fecit."

See "Inscriptionum Antiquarum Sylloge," &c. a Guil. Fleetwood, Coll. Regal. apud Cantab. Socio. 1691.

Hogarth, manufactured between Garrick and himself, is appropriate; and the last stanza, especially, very striking:

"If genius fire thee, reader, stay:
If nature touch thee, drop a tear;
If neither move thee, turn away,
For Hogarth's honor'd dust lies here."

That on Philipps, the musician, is smartly expressed; while those on Dr. Goldsmith and on Dr. Parnell are written with classical elegance: but, on his principle above laid down, one would suppose that Parnell was the more celebrated poet of the two. Those on Sir Thomas Hanmer, Henry Thrale, Esq., and Mrs. H. M. Salisbury, are long.

Where an epitaph is written in Latin, there should certainly be given a translation in the common tongue of the country; otherwise, one great object of inscribing epitaphs would be lost to a great portion of the people. Dr. Johnson approved of epitaphs written in Latin; and such may be fitting, in cases of eminence, where the living from all parts of the world are led to the tombs of the dead.

Perhaps in no one department of writing has the varied talent of mankind been more displayed than in the writing of epitaphs. Some inscriptions are of a witty, or serio-comic nature; some laudatory of the dead, at the expense of the characters of the living; some enigmatical; some expressing lamentations in true poetry. We find specimens of these sorts largely abounding in Grecian and Roman, as well as in English literature. Let a few examples, from modern sources, be given. The following was written by the Rev. H. St. J. Bullen, Vicar of Dunton, Bucks, on the death of a well-known driver of a coach that ran between Aylesbury and London:

"Parker, farewell! thy *journey* now is ended,
Death has the *whip-hand*, and with *dust* thou'rt blended:
Thy *way-bill* is examined, and I trust
Thy last *account* may prove exact and just:
When He who rules the *chariot* of the day
Where life is light! whose word the *living way*
Where *travelers* like yourself of every age
And every clime have taken their *last stage*,
The God of mercy, and the God of love,
*Show you the road* to Paradise above!"

On the sea-coast you find epitaphs of the same kind, but in nautical terms. This one is to be seen in Great Neston church-yard, in Cheshire, and is but one out of many :

"Though Boreas' blasts and Neptune's waves
Have tost me to and fro,
In spite of both, by God's decree,
I'm harbor'd here below.
Here at anchor I do lie
With many of our fleet,
In hopes for to set sail again
Our Saviour Christ to meet."

The poet Wordsworth (and he and Southey have written many epitaphs, from which a few lines might be becomingly culled for our church-yards) has condescended to use such terms in one of his inscriptions, in which, after more allusions to a nautical life, we read :*

"We sail the sea of life—a *calm* one finds,
And one a *tempest*—and, the voyage o'er
Death is the quiet haven of us all."

In the "Gentleman's Magazine," too (1747), an epitaph on an inactive vice-admiral thus commences, but we may be sure it was not engraved on his tombstone :

"Pass o'er this grave without concern,
Here lies old *vice* from *head* to *stern ;*
Averse to strike a blow in fight,
Inaction was his chief delight.
He quiet lies, as off *Toulon*,
*Pacific* son of old *Neptune*."

The following is a specimen of ill-feeling conveyed in the same kind of way, and is to be found in St. Weonard's church-yard, in the county of Hereford :

"Life is a city full of crooked streets,
Death is the market-place where all men meets.
If life were merchandise that man could buy,
The rich would live, and all the poor would die."

Take another, on a poor man buried *outside* a church ; although the authenticity of this, as having been actually used, is not vouched for :

* Wordsworth's Poems, vol. v. p. 305.

"Here lies I, at the church door:
Here lies I, because I's poor!
The farther you go, the more you pay,
Here lies I, as warm as they!"

In Easthope church-yard, in the county of Salop, there is the history of a transaction (and, by the way, it is reported not to be true), which should never have been placed on a tombstone. The narrative is as follows, spoken by two sisters, of their brother:

"Beneath this stone there lies an honest man,
Whose spotless life the keenest eye might scan,
For ages past, from father, son, possess'd
(But here our tears can scarcely be repress'd)
A little farm whose cot near yonder stile
Points onward to this ancient sacred pile,
On his paternal lot he was intent,
Which gave him bread, with which he was content
His son in youthful days—hard tale to tell—
In thoughtless mood the little farm did sell,
Which shortly turn'd us from our native home,
Solitary, sad, th' inhospitable world to roam.*
But Heaven decrees—then why should we repine,
To dust our dust, to God our souls resign."

In Stoke Newington church-yard the following words are inscribed upon the tomb of a young man who was killed by the fire of the military in Lord George Gordon's riots:

"O earth, cover not thou my blood!"

This was on the famous Peter Aretine, a man of extraordinary powers of treachery and presumption, yet flattered and loaded with gifts, in his day. A sketch of his character is given in the "Gentleman's Magazine" for 1750; and this satirical epitaph is found in Misson's Voyage to Italy:

"Comprimit hoc marmor Petri cineres Aretini,
Mortales atro qui sale perfricuit.
Intactus Deus est illi, causamque rogatus,
Hanc dedit, Ille, inquit, non mihi notus erat.'"

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* The opening lines of Virgil's 9th Eclogue will occur to some:

"O Lycida, *vivi pervenimus*, ut possessor agelli
Diceret; hæc mea sunt; veteres migrate coloni,
*Nunc victi, tristes, quoniam fors omnia vertat,*
*Hos illi* (*quod nec benè vertat*) mittimus hædos."

"Here lies a man, who no man spared,
When the angry fit was on him;
Nor God himself had better fared,
If ARETINE had known him."

The most practically *beneficial* epitaph is the celebrated one against Quack Doctors, or against taking physic unnecessarily, written by an Italian:

"Stavo benè, ma per star meglio—sto qui."†

Here is a specimen of the enigmatical, reputed to be inscribed on a tombstone in the church-yard of Llandinabo, in Herefordshire:

"Templum, Bellum, Spelunca,
De Terra in Arcu."

Reader! you must at once be given the meaning of this, for probably you would rack your brains in vain. Here it is:

"CHURCH-WAR-DEN
OF LLAND-IN-A-BO."

Let us proceed to a more agreeable order of epitaphs; and of these the name is indeed Legion. Those taken from Scripture are perhaps the best. "Thy brother shall rise again," was placed on the tombstone of a young man who left two sorrowing sisters behind. "Behold I am vile!" followed by "Blessed are the dead!" spake on another tombstone of the fate of both body and soul. The following is on a flat stone placed over the grave of a clergyman's widow, in Great Neston church-yard:

"READER!
In the midst of life we are in death!
Be ye therefore ready,
for ye know neither the
day nor the hour of
the Son of Man's coming.
Farewell, but not for long."

---

† This can not be done full justice to in our language, owing to the idiom of the Italian tongue, where "cum *sta*" signifies—"How do you do?" It may be translated thus:
"I was well, but, wishing to be better, *here* I am."

That of Mason on his wife, in the Cathedral of Bristol, beginning,

"Take, holy earth, all that my soul held dear,"

is very beautiful. Also there is one of exquisite beauty in the church-yard of Brading, in the Isle of Wight, written by an exciseman, and worthy of Burns. Is there not an originality in the asking *forgiveness* for expressing sorrow, and entertaining the *wish*, as told in the first four lines?

"Forgive, blest shade, the tributary tear
Which mourns thy exit from a world like this;
Forgive the wish that would have kept thee here,
And staid thy progress to the realms of bliss."*

The following is well expressed, had it been on a better man:

"Beneath these poplars' peaceful shade,
Thy dear remains, Rousseau, are laid:
Approach ye good, approach ye kind,
For his was once a kindred mind."†

This will be admired:

"The maid that owns this humble stone,
Was scarce in yonder hamlet known:
And yet her sweets (but Heaven denied)
Had graced the cot where late she died;
Behold, how fresh the verdure grows,
Where *Peace* and *Innocence* repose.

"Thou, too, not unimproved depart;
Go, guard like her the rural heart,
Go, keep her grass-grown sod in mind,
'Till death, the foe whom thou shalt find,
Bedew'd with many a simple tear,
Shall lay thy *village virtues* here."‡

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* The late Dr. Calcott (Doctor of Music) was so delighted with these lines, that he set them to music, and the music may easily obtained.

† Gentleman's Magazine, 1748, p. 471.

‡ The Student vol. ii. p. 230.

On a man of literature, on one who was in *a shade, but shining*, we read this :

"Multis pervulgatus,
Paucis notus;
Qui vitam, inter lucem et umbram,
Nec eruditus nec idiota,
Literis deditus, transegit; sed ut homo
Qui humani nihil a se alienum putavit.
Vitâ simul, et laboribus functus,
Hic requiescere voluit." *

And this one on the famous author of "Anatomy of Melancholy :"

"Paucis notus, faucioribus ignotus,
Hic jacet *Democritus* junior,
Cui vitam dedit et mortem
Melancholia."

The above is the epitaph of a melancholy yet humorous student. On his monument, in Christ Church, is his bust, in ruff, gown, hair, and beard—with a scheme of his nativity.

Of more celebrated epitaphs, these two are pointed and concise. This on Raphael's monument, by Cardinal Bembo :

"Ille hìc est Raphael, timuit quo sospite, vinci
Rerum magna Parens, et moriente mori." †

On Moliere, the comedian and dramatist :

"Roscius hìc situs est tristi Molierus in urnâ
Cui genus humanum ludere, lusus erat.
Dum ludit Mortem, Mors indignata Jocantem
Corripit, et Mimum fingere sæva negat."

Moliere, it will be recollected, wrote a comedy entitled "Le Malade Imaginaire," in which he himself acted the part of the imaginary sick man, and while acting in the play, was taken ill, and died soon after being removed from the stage.

In the church of Acton Scott, Salop, there is the following inscription, on brass, commemorative of the ancient family of Mytton. The father and mother are each repre-

* Bowyer's Life, p. 558.

† In plain English prose may be thus rendered, "Here lies that Raphael, during whose life Nature feared to be surpassed, and by whose death, she feared to die also."

sented, facing one anotner, kneeling at desks with open books thereon, and a death's head on the side of each desk; their hands raised in the attitude of prayer, and themselves habited in long robes. Behind the mother are two daughters in the same habit and attitude, and behind the father a train of nine sons. The engraving of the epitaph, the rhyme of which hardly strikes a reader at first, is beneath this representation, which is on a small brass plate, fixed to the northern wall of the church:

"Here lyeth entombed in claye the Carcase
of Elisabeth Mytton who late was the wyffe
of Thomas Mytton, a gentle + by race
wyth these aleven god blessed their lyffe.
When layed together + and liffe led aright,
descended of Gentrye + and Daught. she was
of S. Edward Grydell Albermyke then knight,
She yelded her breath and endeed her race
the aleventh of March + and y^e^ yere of grace
A thousand fyve hundred seventye and one
To whome God grant a Joyfull resuryrection."

In Sir William Sutton's epitaph in Avesham church, Notts, is this pretty idea:

"Sir William Sutton's corpse here tombed sleeps
Whose happy soul in better mansion keeps
Thrice nine years lived he with his lady fair,
A lovely, noble, and like virtuous pair;
Their generous offspring, parents' joy of heart,
Eight of each sex: *of each an equal part*
*Usher'd to heaven their father; and the other*
*Remain'd behind him to attend their mother.*"

The epitaph on the Earl and Countess of Pembroke and their offspring, concludes thus:

"This was a truly noble family, for all
The sons were valiant, and all
The daughters virtuous."

In Llangarren church-yard are these lines on a young child, which are affecting from their beautiful and joyous simplicity:

"O Christ! my happy soul!
I was so early blest!
I was so early call'd,
To my eternal rest."

In Tretire church-yard is this:

"You traveler whoe'er this stone may view,
Learn to be wise, nor fleeting hopes pursue,
Life's but an evening breeze, a murm'ring breath,
Which blows till sunset, then grows calm in death."

In Ross church-yard is this very beautiful one:

"By all beloved, and by her Saviour bless'd,
Almost unwarn'd, Death summon'd her away;
Yet no alarm the dying saint express'd
For her whole life was a communion day."

In Hainton church-yard, near Market Rasen, the following words appear on a grave-stone:

"In memory of Thomas Brown and wife:
He first deceased: she for a little tried
To live without him, liked it not, and died."

In the church-yard of Compton Beauchamp, in Berkshire, is this ancient one:

"Here lieth the Bodie
of Margaret White,
who died the 20th of July,
Anno Domini 1627,
in her tender yeares.

MORIOR.

"A weeke of yeares I
Lived, and that exprest,
God called me hence to
Heav'n's Sabbatick rest.
I ranne according to
My yeares my race,
And now God's glorie
Crownes in me His grace."

Dr. Johnson, after quoting a saying of Seneca, that "death falls heavy upon him who is too much known to others, and too little to himself," gives us* the instructive epitaph on the tomb of Pontanus, a man celebrated among the early restorers of literature:

"I am Pontanus, beloved by the powers of literature, admired by men of worth, and dignified by the monarchs of the world. Thou

* Rambler, No. 28. Pontanus was an Italian statesman, historian, and Latin poet. Born A.D. 1426; died A.D. 1503.

knowest now who I am, or more properly who I was. For thee, stranger, I who am in darkness can not know thee, *but I entreat thee to know thyself.*"

Johnson wrote an elegant Latin epitaph for the tomb of his wife, and also epitaphs for his father, mother, and brother; and in giving his orders, he writes, "Do not let the difference of ten pounds, or more, defeat our purpose." The remembrance of poor "Tetty" is one of the best traits of Dr. Johnson's tenderness of heart. In this he was equaled by the benevolent Howard; for we are told, "that the day of her death" (of the wife of Howard) "was held sacred in his calendar—kept for evermore as a day of fasting and meditation."* But Dr. Johnson's sermon on the death of his wife is her best epitaph; an epitaph which can convey comfort and warning to thousands of her fellow-creatures. "In this age of wild opinions," he says, "she was as free from skepticism as the cloistered virgin. She never wished to signalize herself by the singularity of paradox. She had a just diffidence of her own reason, and desired to practice rather than to dispute. Her practice was such as her opinions naturally produced. She was exact and regular in her devotions, full of confidence in the divine mercy, submissive to the dispensations of Providence, extensively charitable in her judgments and opinions, grateful for every kindness that she received, and willing to impart assistance of every kind to all whom her little power enabled her to benefit."† And then he warns all, "lest he who looks on this grave unalarmed, may sink unreformed into his own."

* We are informed by his biographer, that "every thing connected with her memory, how distantly soever, was hallowed in his mind by the association. Many years after her demise, on the eve of his departure on one of his perilous journeys across the continent of Europe, he was walking in the gardens with his son, examining some plantations, &c. On coming to the planted walk, he stood still: there was a pause in the conversation; the old man's thoughts were busy with the past. At length he broke silence. "Jack," said he, in a tender and solemn tone, "in case I should not come back, you will pursue this work, or not, as you may think proper; but remember, this walk was planted by your mother; *and, if ever you touch a twig of it, may my blessing never rest upon you!*"

† Vol. ii. p. 235.

Yes—this should be the grand care and concern of all; and many, in various ways,* do bear this thought in their remembrance all the days of their life. Johnson said that this rule of Dr. Cheyne should be imprinted on every mind: "To neglect nothing to secure my eternal peace, more than if I had been certified I should die within the day; nor to mind any thing that my secular obligations and duties demanded of me, less than if I had been insured to live fifty years more." And excellently hath Sir Thomas Browne said,† "Be substantially great in thyself, and more than thou appearest unto others: and let the world be deceived in thee, as they are in the lights of heaven. Measure not thyself by thy morning shadow, but by the extent of thy grave: and reckon thyself above the earth, by the line thou must be contented with under it . . . . . Could the world unite in

* Some take a singular mode of doing this; for instance, "Mr. Dick Smith, master of the tap-house, Vauxhall. The singular oddity of this man's character may be worth relating. He had caused one part of his tap-room to be painted, representing a country church and church-yard, with grave-stones, and the initial letters of such of his deceased friends as he deemed worthy to lie in the best ground, with a grave left open for himself to lie among them. Those whom he deemed mean, pitiful fellows, were placed in the poor ground, at a distance. This man being thus familiarized with death, took a formal leave of his friends about twelve o'clock on Thursday, though seemingly in good health; told them he should never see them more, went up stairs, and died in about half an hour after; and is now put into a coffin of a new construction, made of different sorts of wood, and without nails, with a lock and two keys, which he had by him since Christmas for that purpose."—*Gentleman's Magazine* for May 30th, 1782.

Yet we may be reminded that Archbishop Parker ordered his tomb-stone to be fitted up before his death, that he might look upon it while he lived. He had many inscriptions, reminding him of death, engraven on the walls of his house and the glass of his windows; and on the seal of his See was the manner of the last Judgment. Bishop Wilson (Sodor and Man) also ordered a favorite elm to be cut down and sawed into planks some years before his death, so that in the preparation made for his coffin he might have a *memento mori* before his eyes. Jeremy Taylor tells us always to let the striking of the clock be accompanied with a meditation on our proportionate advancement to eternity.

† *Christian Morals*, by Sir Thomas Browne, of Norwich, author of *Religio Medici*. Payne. Dr. Johnson wrote the author's life, which is prefixed to this work.

the practice of that despised train of virtues, which the divine ethics of our Saviour hath so inculcated upon us, *the furious face of things must disappear:* Eden would be yet to be found, and the angels might look down, not with pity, but joy upon us."

And to bring the subject still more home to every individual, let the following lines be quoted for the mindfulness of a time that must come to each reader in more or less degree:

"Oh! the sad day,
When men shall shake their heads and say,
Of miserable me,
Hark how he groans! look how he pants for breath
See how he struggles in the pangs of death!
When they shall say of these my eyes,
How hollow and how dim they be!
Look how his breast doth swell and rise
Against his potent enemy!
When some old friend shall step to my bedside,
Touch my chill face, and thence shall gently slide;
And when his next companions say,
How does he do? what hopes?—shall turn away,
Answering only with a lift-up hand,
Who can his fate withstand?
Then shall a gasp or two do more,
Than all my rhetoric could before,
Persuade the world to trouble me no more."

And more than this—for in that awful hour must every man, however orthodox in sacred knowledge, however pious in daily practice, and however dignified in person or estate, exclaim, with the almost matchless George Herbert,

"Throw away thy rod,
Throw away thy wrath,
O my God,
Take the gentle path."

And would not these very lines themselves form a good epitaph? What better prayer for the soul (if it could be permitted to pray) awaiting the tribunal of the judgment day? Doubtless, from many of our sacred poets appropriate lines might be selected for the purpose of epitaphs: and it would be well, if the friends of the deceased would usually

consult the clergyman of the parish, or some other discreet friend, in this matter, rather than, by leaving the choice to an unlettered stone-cutter, deface the tomb-stones of a church-yard.* We should best obtain modest and instructive epitaphs, if persons in their life-time would select some sentence or verse which they might feel would have a solemn effect either on the devout perambulator, or on the mere idle stroller, in our church-yards. And what could be a more grateful idea than that of contributing to the welfare of our fellow-creatures, however few, after we are gone!

> "Nunc vivo, neque adhuc homines lucemque relinquo!
> Sed linquam."

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* See Tract on Tombstones, by Rev. E. Paget: also, Remarks on English Churches, by T. H. Markland, F.R.S. & S.A.

## CHAPTER XXI.

### CLOSE OF DR. JOHNSON'S LIFE.—THE FEAR OF DEATH.

We now come to a subject that all men should regard with feelings of solemnity and awe, and discourse of in a gentle tone, as Dr. Johnson ever did—namely, the fear of death. And herein we shall view so much of the true magnanimity of his mind—the tenderness of his conscience—the reality of his soul's religion—that if we have admired his talent and his benevolence in life, we shall reverence his resignation and fortitude, at the last, in death. That he had a fear of death continually before him, is a fact; but it was, though not wholly, a becoming fear, the fear of a mind sensible of the doom that awaited the transgressor, sensible of the justice of the Almighty, sensible of his own utter unworthiness, fearful lest Christ's merits might not avail him; it was the fear of a steadfast believer who dare not acquit himself, dare not presumptuously anticipate the sentence of his Judge, of one, who, with a permission to cherish hope, must, to the very last, *work out his own salvation with fear and trembling.*

Let us first present his own recorded sayings and conversations on this matter, and they are worthy our profoundest consideration and reflection, at the same time that they must, in no small degree, call forth our pity and regret.

He was a man that never could bear bravado upon any occasion. General Paoli had said, that a great portion of the fashionable infidelity sprung out of a desire of showing courage. "Men," observed the general, "who have no opportunity of showing it as to things in this life, take death and futurity as objects on which to display it." Johnson answered, "That is mighty foolish affectation. Fear is one of the passions of human nature, of which it is impossible to divest it. You remember that the Emperor Charles V.,

when he read upon the tombstone of a Spanish nobleman, 'Here lies one who never knew fear,' wittily said, "Then he never snuffed a candle with his fingers.'"

He was much pleased with a remark of General Paoli, which was mentioned to him by Boswell, "That it is impossible not to be afraid of death; and that those who at the time of dying are not afraid, are not thinking of death, but of applause, or something else, which keeps death out of their sight: so that all men are equally afraid of death when they see it: only some have a power of turning away their sight from it better than others."

This observation must particularly apply to soldiers in the tumult and glory of battle. Johnson looked upon *preparation* for death as the grand thing, and would have had all soldiers especially prepared. "If a man," he said, "can be supposed to make no provision for death in war, what can be the state that would have awakened him to the care of futurity? When would that man have prepared himself to die, who went to seek death without preparation?"

There is an article in the *Gentleman's Magazine* (1747) which bears strong internal evidence of being the production of Johnson's pen, on the behavior of Lord Lovat at his execution, and which censures the display of pleasantry and lightness in the hour of death. Lord Lovat was a profligate, hypocritical, and cowardly man: had he been better, and braver, he would have met the "last enemy" in a different spirit, and with other bearing.

"When I first entered Ranelagh," says Johnson, speaking of the Vauxhall-gardens of his day, "it gave an expansion and gay sensation to my mind, such as I never experienced any where else. But as Xerxes wept when he viewed his immense army, and considered that not one of that great multitude would be alive a hundred years afterward, so it went to my heart to consider that there was not one in all that brilliant circle that was not afraid *to go home and think:* but that the thoughts of each individual there would be distressing when alone." Alas! how many would die without thinking—and the more thought, the more fear of death.

"You know," he says to Mrs. Thrale, "I never thought confidence with respect to futurity *any part of the character of a brave, a wise, or a good man.* Bravery has no place where it can avail nothing: wisdom impresses strongly the consciousness of those faults, of which it is, perhaps, itself an aggravation; and goodness, always wishing to be better, and imputing every deficiency to criminal indulgence, and every fault to voluntary corruption, never dares to suppose the condition of forgiveness fulfilled, nor what is wanting in the crime supplied by penitence." But, surely, in such a case there is a lack of faith in the promises of God?

"The serenity which is not felt," he says again, "it can be no virtue to feign."

The sternest love of truth always pervaded his mind. He once said, "There is something noble in publishing truth, though it condemns one's self," and we may feel certain that, as in life's best days, so in its last hour, he would be no dissembler. Boswell told him of the unconcerned way in which some criminals met their death at Tyburn gallows: "Most of them," said Johnson, "have never thought at all." "But," asked Boswell, "is not the fear of death natural to man?" Johnson answered, "So much so, sir, that the whole of life is but keeping away the thoughts of it." He then, in a low and earnest tone, talked of his meditating upon the awful hour of his own dissolution, and in what manner he should conduct himself upon that occasion. "I know not," he said, "whether I should wish to have a friend by me, or have it all between God and myself." How awful must it have been to have heard this; and yet how much real courage in the thought!

To Boswell's inquiry, whether we might not fortify our minds for the approach of death, he answered, "No, sir, let it alone. *It matters not how a man dies, but how he lives.* The act of dying is not of importance, it lasts so short a time." He added, with an earnest look, "A man knows it must be so, and submits. It will do him no good to whine."

To Boswell he wrote, in the beginning of the year in which he died, "My nights are very sleepless, and very tedious, and yet I am extremely afraid of dying."

Two months after, he wrote to Dr. Taylor, "O my friend, the approach of death is very dreadful! I am afraid to think on that which I know I can not avoid. It is vain to look round and round for that help which can not be had. Yet we hope and hope, and fancy that he who has lived to-day may live to-morrow. *But let us learn to derive our hope only from God. In the mean time, let us be kind one to another.*"

Here, amid some salutary feelings of a righteous fear, with much painful misgiving, we perceive his moral and religious heroism to break forth: looking unto God, like David, in all affliction: cherishing kindness, like St. Paul, toward all his fellow-creatures. He does not whine, he submits.

Somewhat later, when at Oxford, he acknowledged that he was much oppressed by the fear of death. The amiable Dr. Adams suggested that God was infinitely good.

JOHNSON.—"That He is infinitely good, as far as the perfection of His nature will allow, I certainly, believe; but it is necessary for good upon the whole, that individuals should be punished. As to an *individual*, therefore, He is not infinitely good: and as I can not be *sure* that I have fulfilled the conditions on which salvation is granted, I am afraid I may be one of those who shall be damned."

DR. ADAMS.—"What do you mean by damned?"

JOHNSON.—loudly and passionately—"Sent to hell, sir, and punished everlastingly."

DR. ADAMS.—"I don't believe that doctrine."

JOHNSON.—"Hold, sir; do you believe that some will be punished at all?"

DR. ADAMS.—"Being excluded from heaven will be a punishment; yet there may be no great positive suffering."

JOHNSON.—"Well, sir, but if you admit any degree of punishment, there is an end of your argument for infinite goodness, simply considered; for infinite goodness would inflict no punishment whatever. There is not infinite goodness physically considered; morally there is."

BOSWELL—"But may not a man attain to such a degree of hope as to keep him quiet? You see I am not quiet, from the vehemence with which I talk; but I do not despair."

Mrs. Adams.—"You seem, sir, to forget the merits of our Redeemer."

Johnson.—"Madam, I do not forget the merits of my Redeemer; but my Redeemer has said that He will set some on His right hand, and some on His left." He was in gloomy agitation, and said, "I'll have no more on't."

This was one of Johnson's gloomiest conversations; and his solemn feelings, together with his desire not to intrude on unsearchable matters, prompted him now, as at other times, to cease from further conversation; especially since it had come to a point when he would rather humble himself in prayer and reflection, than continue merely to talk, although his talking took place with none who were inclined to be vain, or scoff, or think lightly. We must always bear in mind, that he was subject to a hypochondriac disorder, which, in spite of every resolution to the contrary, will weigh down the spirits involuntarily. Indeed, he would have manifested any degree of courage to get rid of this melancholy distemper, and, on one occasion, he emphatically exclaimed, "I would consent to have a limb amputated to recover my spirits." Let the naturally cheerful Christian pause, before he ventures to condemn.

He always felt severely the loss of friends. Soon after this conversation, he writes to Dr. Burney, "I have lost dear Mr. Allen; and wherever I turn, the dead or the dying meet my notice, and force my attention upon misery and mortality." He adds, "We have run this morning (in a chariot) twenty-four miles, and could run forty-eight more. *But who can run the race with Death?*" The italics are his own. For Allen he had a high esteem, and when struck speechless a year before, he wrote to him immediately to come, and arrange his affairs. Probably he looked for his faithful services at a future day.

Mrs. Piozzi bears testimony that Johnson had no fear, except on the thought of death. "Fear was, indeed," she says, "a sensation to which Dr. Johnson was an utter stranger" (she goes further than he himself would allow), "excepting when some sudden apprehensions seized him that he was going to die: and, even then, he kept all his wits about him,

to express the most humble and pathetic petitions to the Almighty;" and she gives us instances of his calmness, even when in supposed peril of death.

It was no puling fear that affected Dr. Johnson, even in this latter case, for he always placed the sensation on a rational foundation. It was not the actual pain of dying that he dreaded, but the hereafter that followed. Some persons in a company at Salisbury, of which Dr. Johnson was one, vouched for the company, that there was nobody in it afraid of death. "Speak for yourself, sir," said Johnson, "for indeed, I am."

"I did not say of *dying*," replied the other; "but of death, meaning its consequences."

"And so I mean," rejoined the doctor; "I am very seriously afraid of the consequences."

So far from fearing the actual pang of death, he thought it wrong that any one should not be told of its approach. "I deny," he said, "the lawfulness of telling a lie to a sick man, for fear of alarming him. You have no business with consequences; you are to tell the truth. Of all lying, I have the greatest abhorrence of this, because I believe it has been frequently practiced on myself." A lie is justifiable, according to Paley, in some extreme cases of self-preservation, but certainly not in this matter; and besides, we should always recollect, that even if the uttermost inconvenience should follow, all will soon be rectified, and the departed person may have reason to rejoice in that course being pursued, against which his wishes revolted when on the earth.

It is certain, that he thought that every good man should be fearful of death. When told that Dr. Dodd seemed to be willing to die, and full of hopes of happiness, "Sir," said he, "Dr. Dodd would have given both his hands and both his legs to have lived. The better a man is, the more afraid is he of death, having a clearer view of infinite purity." In this sentiment, we can not but think Dr. Johnson as wholly wrong, as he is right in many of his observations. It may be said, that all the Gospel, written, felt, and practiced, is against him. Boswell mentioned to him a friend of his who was formerly gloomy from low spirits, and much distressed

by the fear of death, but was now uniformly placid, and contemplated his dissolution without any perturbation. "Sir," said Johnson, "this is only a disordered imagination taking a different turn." And yet in himself in his last hours it was not so.

Boswell related a passage in Hawthornden's "Cypress Grove," wherein it is said, that after having been in the show-room of life, we should cheerfully give place to others, as those before us had given their room to us. "Yes, sir," said Johnson, "if he is sure he is to be well after he goes out of it. But if he is to grow blind after he goes out of the show-room, and never to see any thing again, or if he does not know whither he is to go next, a man will not go cheerfully out of a show-room, No wise man will be contented to die, if he thinks he is to go into a state of punishment. Nay, no wise man will be contented to die, if he thinks he is to fall into annihilation; for, however unhappy any man's existence may be, he yet would rather have it, than not exist at all. No: there is no rational principle by which a man can die contented, *but a trust in the mercy of God, through the merits of Jesus Christ.*"

"This short sermon," observes Boswell, "delivered with an earnest tone, in a boat upon the sea, which was perfectly calm, on a day appropriated to religious worship, while every one listened with an air of satisfaction, had a most pleasing effect upon my mind." What a contrast, we may add, between the really brave mind of the religious Dr. Johnson, and the feignedly bold one of the skeptical Shelley, when passing over God's seas.*

Boswell expressed a horror at the thought of death.

Mrs. Knowles.—"Nay, thou shouldest not have a horror for what is the gate of life."

Johnson.—(standing upon the hearth, rolling about, with a serious, solemn, and somewhat gloomy air)—"No rational man can die without uneasy apprehension."

Mrs. Knowles.—"The Scripture tells us, 'The righteous shall have *hope* in his death.'"

* See Julian and Maddalo—and Shelley, after this conversation actually drowned!

JOHNSON.—"Yes, madam; that is, he shall not have despair. But, consider, his hope of salvation must be founded on the terms on which it is promised that the mediation of our Saviour shall be applied to us, namely, obedience: and where obedience has failed, then, as suppletory to it, repentance. But what man can say, that his obedience has been such as he would approve of in another, or even in himself, upon close examination, or that his repentance has not been such as to require being repented of? No man can be sure that his obedience and repentance will obtain salvation."

MRS. KNOWLES continued, "But divine intimation of acceptance may be made to the soul."

JOHNSON.—"Madam, it may; but I should not think the better of a man who should tell me on his death-bed, he was sure of salvation. A man can not be sure himself that he has divine intimation of acceptance, much less can he make others sure that he has it."

BOSWELL.—"Then sir, we must be contented to acknowledge that death is a terrible thing."

JOHNSON.—"Yes, sir, I have made no approaches to a state which can look on it as not terrible."

MRS. KNOWLES.—"Does not St. Paul say, 'I have fought the good fight of faith, I have finished my course; henceforth is laid up for me a crown of life?'"

JOHNSON.—"Yes, madam; but here was a man inspired, a man who had been converted by supernatural interposition."

BOSWELL.—"In prospect death is dreadful; but in fact we find that people die easy."

JOHNSON.—"Why, sir, most people have not *thought* much of the matter, so can not *say* much, and it is supposed they die easy. Few believe it certain they are then to die; and those who do, set themselves to behave with resolution, as a man does who is going to be hanged: he is not the less unwilling to be hanged."

At another time he said, talking of the fear of death, "Some people are not afraid, because they look upon salvation as the effect of an absolute decree, and think they feel in themselves the marks of sanctification. Others, and those the most rational, in my opinion, look upon salvation as con-

ditional; and as they never can be sure that they have complied with the conditions, they are afraid."

The terms of salvation are certainly conditional; they are on the condition that we believe; and if we really believe, we love; and if we truly love, we keep Christ's commandments; so that the conditions are, faith, love, and obedience, with repentance and conversion from any sin we may unhappily fall into; and this we call justification by faith alone, because we mean thereby a faith that worketh by love.

He had before warned Boswell against transitory impressions. "Do not, sir, accustom yourself to trust to *impressions*. There is a middle state between conviction and hypocrisy, of which many are unconscious." And after stating the danger of impressions, as destroying our free agency, he continued, "Favorable impressions at particular moments, as to the state of our souls,* may be deceitful and dangerous. In general, no man can be sure of his acceptance with God: some, indeed, may have had it revealed to them. St. Paul, who wrought miracles, may have had a miracle wrought on himself, and may have obtained supernatural assurance of pardon, mercy, and beatitude; yet St. Paul, though he expresses strong hope, also expresses fear, lest having preached to others, he himself should be cast away."

Not fear, but caution, exclusive of the ground of fear. St. Paul's hope was contingent on his continued mortification and subjection of the body. He also says, "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day."

* Cecil says, "A *sanguine* man sees a sign and token in every thing, in every ordinary occurrence his imagination hears a call; his pious fancy is the source and food of an eager, disquieted, and restless habit of mind."

Again, "Constitutional bias is a suspicious interpreter of *Providential Leadings*."—*Cecil's Remains.*

Charles Simeon writes, after a dangerous illness, "As for joyful anticipations of the blessedness of heaven, neither the habit of my mind, nor the state of my body, nor indeed, *the character of my religion* (the religion of a sinner at the foot of the cross), led to them: to be 'kept in perfect peace' was more in accordance with my wishes, and that mercy God richly vouchsafed unto me," &c.—*Letter to Bishop of Calcutta, Memoirs*, p. 515, see also p. 181, 489.

Whether he here means his own soul, or the great charge of the Christian religion,* we see here nothing but the fullest confidence in Christ, none in himself. He would still exclaim, "Let him that thinketh he standeth," in sure acceptance with God, "take heed lest he fall;" fall away by sinful habits from a state of grace.

Preparation for death was the great concern of Dr. Johnson's life, and we can imagine that the words, "Prepare to meet thy God" were never absent from his memory. In a letter to Mrs. Porter, he writes, "As we daily see our friends die round us, we that are left must cling closer, and, if we can do nothing more, at least pray for one another; and remember, that as others die we must die too, and prepare ourselves diligently for the last great trial."

Well did he, in general terms, define the happiness of the blessed. "The happiness," he said, "of an unembodied spirit will consist in a consciousness of the favor of God, in the contemplation of truth, and in the possession of felicitating ideas."

Boswell suggested: "One of the most pleasing thoughts is, that we shall see our friends again."

Johnson.—"Yes, sir; but you must consider, that when we are become purely rational, many of our friendships will be cut off. Many friendships are formed by a community of sensual pleasures; all these will be cut off. We form many friendships with bad men, because they have agreeable qualities, and they can be useful to us; but, after death, they can no longer be of use to us. We form many friendships by mistake, imagining people to be different from what they really are. After death, we shall see every one in a true light. Then, sir, they talk of our meeting our relations; but then all relationship is dissolved; and we shall have no regard for one person more than another; but for their real value. However, we shall either have the satisfaction of meeting our friends, or be satisfied without meeting them." What good sense pervades this conversation.

Boswell continued.—"Yet, sir, we see in Scripture, that Dives still retained an anxious concern about his brethren."

* This latter is the opinion of Dr. Pye Smith.

He might also have mentioned chap. vi. 9–11, of St. John's Revelations.

JOHNSON.—"Why, we must either suppose that passage to be metaphorical, or hold, with many divines, and all the Purgatorians, that departed souls do not all at once arrive at the utmost perfection of which they are capable."

BOSWELL.—"I think, sir, that is a very rational supposition."

JOHNSON.—"Why, yes, sir; but we do not know it is a true one. There is no harm in believing it; but you must not compel others to make it an article of faith; for it is not revealed."

We may, however, think that it is revealed, as we have before shown.

Boswell was fond of inducing Johnson to speak of the future life. He relates the following in a pleasing manner. "While Johnson and I stood in calm conference in Dr. Taylor's garden at a pretty late hour in a serene autumn night, looking up to the heavens, I directed the discourse to the subject of a future state. My friend was in a placid and most benignant frame of mind. 'Sir,' said he, 'I do not imagine that all things will be made clear to us immediately after death, but that the ways of Providence will be explained to us very gradually.'"

When told, at another time, that Dr. Percy felt uneasiness at the thoughts of leaving his house, his study, his books, he remarked, "This is foolish in Percy; a man need not be uneasy on these grounds; for, as he will retain his consciousness, he may say with the philosopher, *omnia mea mecum porto*." One of the Essays of Elia will recur to our memory, in connection with this feeling of Dr. Percy.

## FEAR OF DEATH IN CHRISTIAN MEN.

Such were Johnson's feelings on the subject of death, and before we come to his own last hours, let us say a few words on this solemn matter. It is very certain that the fear of death is a natural fear; it is implanted by the God of nature

in our hearts. We can see the reason of this—because but for its strong hold on our minds, men would too often be committing suicide; and murder itself might be regarded as a kindness. The Scriptures represent the future life as so supremely happy, that not only should we seek death for the purpose of escaping the pains of life, but even its pleasures, seeing that these are so inferior when compared with those in store for us. Let us put it in this way: suppose a poor man was to be told that at such a time, some few years forward, he was to succeed to an estate; that every pleasure should accompany his possession of it; that he himself would be relieved from labor, and that his wife and children would in due time be elevated to his state of prosperity and peace; do we not suppose that he would count the very hours and minutes, and long for the years to elapse, that he might enter upon his inheritance, and from the state of a servant become a master, from that of a laborer be a lord? Well, such is the change that awaits the Christian man. And why does he not desire this change to happen at the earliest period? Why do Christians become alarmed, and send earnestly for the physician, at the approach of illness? Why do they mourn over a sick friend, and cherish, as rays of the happiest hope, any little daily amendment in his health? and why do they thank God that themselves and friends are spared? Spared from what? Spared from His own presence, kept out of heaven, longer chained to the flesh and the earth. We do not doubt of the existence of heaven, or feel any uncertainty of our brother's likelihood of abode there, and still we do all we can to keep him in this world, and mourn his release as a calamity—a calamity often all but insupportable. And why is this? It is because God has implanted certain feelings in the human heart, which His own religion may guide, but can not extirpate—these are, the fear of death, and the love of the brethren.

The fear of death. Should not a perfect love of God cast out that fear? It may: but we are to cherish another kind of fear connected with this subject, a fear of offending God to the very end of our days, and who can say that he offendeth not? The law of the fear of death is not only given by

nature for the preservation of life, but also it is continued though in fainter degree, to the spiritual man for the further reason of keeping his soul careful and humble. Though he may desire the enjoyment of heaven, as much as the poor man longs for the inheritance of his earthly state, yet he is to strive to preserve, to the best of his power, that breath of life which God has given to his care, and to know that it may be God's gracious purpose that he should be more fully tried and exercised before he enter on his heavenly possessions, and therefore he is to wait in patience till his change come. Thus he can not have the certainty stated in the poor man's case. For, on this question the whole matter depends, namely, whether any man can, at any period of his life, say, that he is quite prepared to meet his God; or that he can have any communication, or assurance granted him, that he is certain to go to heaven? If there be the slightest doubt, there must be fear, a proper and reverential fear. Dr. Johnson, as we have seen, thought that man could have no certainty; and we may reasonably think that a man can not be acquitted, to his own knowledge, before his judgment. God knows well who are pardoned even in this life, because He knows those who have truly repented, and unfeignedly believed His holy Gospel, and who will not fall away; but can men not have this knowledge? If not, it must be with Christians as with the enlightened heathen who exclaimed, "Call no man happy" (certainly happy for eternity) "before his death."*

* There is a kind of religious teaching which is very apt to betray souls. The first direction given to men of all characters, is to set out with a firm persuasion of their reconciliation with God and their enjoyment of everlasting happiness. This is surely an inverted order of things. For, our right to the comfort of the promises made to believing Christians, can only be ascertained by the agreement of the temper of our minds and the course of our lives, with the Scripture characters of those privileged persons to whom those promises are appropriated; and to exhort men to arrogate that comfort to themselves, previous to any degree of holy conformity in disposition and conduct to those descriptive characters, is to take the children's bread and give it unto dogs, is to act without gospel warrant or authority, to prescribe rashly, and fatally to mislead the souls of men. This kind of teaching too often leads to nothing better than a bold, presumptuous confidence. Whereas, even with evidence of the best sort attending his course, the true Christian

Very many men will argue for the contrary of this; for men love to think that they are converted and certain of salvation; but the best divines, the purest and humblest of men, will not be contented, save when the work and fruits of the Spirit inspire much hope, with delusive sensations of the mind or heart, that heart which is before all things deceitful.

Many quotations might be given from such men as Jeremy Taylor, Hall, and Beveridge. But hear our thoughtful and evangelical divines of modern times. "For us," says Shuttleworth,* "whose feet have yet to tread the valley of the shadow of death, and to whose eyes the mysterious vail, which conceals the things of the unknown world, has not yet been lifted up, *pride were ridiculous, and confidence premature.*" Dr. Arnold, in an excellent discourse† on Mark xii. 34, tells us, in asking Who are chosen? that "the term (chosen) can by us, strictly speaking, be applied, in its full sense, to those only *who are passed beyond the reach of evil:*" and he will not talk of the "chosen irrevocably." Dr. Hampden writes to the same effect, as also Archbishop Whately. Charles Simeon said,‡ "I think it clear, even to demonstration, that *assurance* is not necessary to saving faith: a simple reliance on Christ for salvation is that faith which the word of God requires: assurance is a privilege, but not a duty;" and he said, that a man "may be fully assured of Christ's power and willingness to save him, and yet not be assured that Christ has actually imparted salvation to him." This is a distinction in which all the difference lies. The Rev. Mr. Jay tells us,§ that cheerfulness in the prospect of death is not invariably nor commonly the feeling of good men. "The fear of

will always proceed on his course trembling while rejoicing. Dr. Arnold draws the picture, "To-day, penitent, justified, and full of assurance—to-morrow, it may be, cast down, and full of humiliation and godly fear. So it will be, and so it must be, till *having finished our course*, and the work of the tempter being ended, and his power stopped forever, we may find there is a peace to be no more disturbed, a rest to be no more broken, an assurance to be no more troubled with fear." *Dr. Arnold's Sermons*, vol. iii. p. 400.

* Sermons on the Leading Principles of Christianity: Ser. 10.

† Christian Life, its Course, &c., Sermon 13.

‡ Simeon's Memoirs, by Rev. W. Carus, p. 20.

§ The Christian Contemplated, &c., Lect. 10, p. 341, &c.

death," he says, "is naturally unavoidable: and must therefore in itself be innocent"—"there are many Christians whose anxieties and forebodings with regard to death, are only dispelled and destroyed by the event itself"—the Christian often "feels much more in the prospect than numbers of those feel, who are ruined by the reality"—and he begs the Christian not to be ashamed of this feeling, adding, "Do not conclude that it is an evidence against the reality or degree of your religion. Do not imagine that it disproves, or renders suspicious, your attachment to the Saviour." "Some religionists," he goes on to say, "are fond of the marvelous and the sudden: and our obituaries are often filled with the triumphant departures of those who began to pray a few days before. This is often peculiarly the case with malefactors. Few of these, if attended by some divines, but in a few hours are quickly ripened for a confident and joyful death. We do not wish to limit the Holy One of Israel in the freeness of His mercy and grace. But wiser people hesitate about these prodigies. They wish for more certainty, more evidence than can satisfactorily be obtained in cases where the impressions of the condition can scarcely be distinguished from the operation of the principle: and therefore, while they may sometimes indulge a hope, they will rarely be disposed to proclaim it." The fact is, there is often too much religious excitement used in such and other cases, and the man is thrown into a fever when he should be left coolly to think.* But who can read these opinions of Mr. Jay, and not commiserate rather than condemn Dr. Johnson. The words of this aged and venerable minister have a vast effect upon thousands and thousands of persons of his way of thinking in general on religious matters; and, we may ask, should not these persons

* I remember reading in a dissenting publication (1848), of the death of a young person under such circumstances, and indeed I believe the instances to be not uncommon. In this case, there was so much prayer, shouting, singing, &c., so much the more renewed whenever the poor patient seemed to relapse into a tranquil state of body or mind, that really she had scarcely time to *commune with herself and be still*: she was forced into an unnatural excitement, and probably her end was hastened, and her soul by no means improved, by such injudicious and unnecessary proceedings.

apply them to the cases of fear of death in those who usually think differently from Mr. Jay and themselves? and hence these religious persons are bound no more severely to upbraid Dr. Johnson, than to find fault with one of their own communion. And when they recall to their memories the natural temperament of Dr. Johnson, they will be the more inclined to pass a merciful judgment. For, as Mr. Jay remarks, there is "the case of constitutional malady. In this condition our heavenly bard died: and we have known others who have died under a physical depression, with which religious encouragements have contended in vain. But though their end was not peace in the exit, it was peace in the issue. *Their despondency did not affect their right to the tree of life. They condemned themselves, but God delighted in them.* And what an exchange; what a surprise did such sufferers experience! They departed, expecting to awake in torment, and found themselves in Abraham's bosom! They left the world in a momentary gloom, and entered into everlasting sunshine!" We should feel very thankful for these sentiments: most thankful to know that a minister of Christ's gospel can conscientiously give deliberate utterance to them.

Men do not rush, then, upon their promised inheritance of glory, because not only a love of life is implanted in them, but because also the fear of death, though mitigated, is not extirpated by feelings of rational certainty as to the future destination of their souls. And, in addition to this, there is the love of our fellow-creatures in this present world. This forms a very strong tie to the present life. The poor man whom we picture as longing to enter upon his wordly estate, would probably fling that estate to the winds if he was told that for twenty or thirty years after he was in possession, his wife and family would be living in utter destitution. A man knows that his family are dependent on his labor; that not only sustenance of body, but independence of mind, and protection from assaults and sneers of the world are theirs so long as he is alive and in health; but that when once he lies on the bed of sickness, or sinks into the grave, all these comforts are most probably, if not quite certainly, over and past for them. Oh, what foreboding thoughts will almost

invariably cast a gloom on the days of his departing life! And even where maintenance is not involved, how must we feel the pain and grief that our departure gives to dear friends! This is far more difficult to bear than any sufferings of our own; and we have known something of its bitterness during the grief of previous farewells! How when we take leave of dearest friends are we pondering on their sorrow, their loss of our individual presence which we know gave delight, and how do we picture their dreariness and wretchedness, and thereby magnify our own immeasurably!* What then must be our sensation on the death-bed, when we have evidence all around of the grief we are causing to others, and even only for the heart's joy of these, would give worlds to arise up from that couch of death, and walk among them cheerfully as in olden times. Every man will assign this feeling as a cause preventing joyfulness in, or longing for death: and the great consolation in this trying hour consists in a firm belief of our reunion with all our friends in the presence of God and the Lamb hereafter. The man who commits suicide is commonly one who feels he can no longer be a benefit to his family and friends, or who thinks himself deserted by friends, but the vast bulk of mankind are influenced by the contrary knowledge and experience; and blessed be God, that we may be allowed to acknowledge ourselves bound by these earthly ties, that we may cherish the desire to remain in this world, without, by such feelings, becoming apprehensive of being charged with fault or offense before God, and endangering the safety of our souls when our time comes: still believing with St. Paul, that to die, whenever it happens, may be gain. Mr. Jay felt that Christians must commonly have those fears and regrets in the contemplation of death, which have been mentioned above: for he says, "The separation from weeping

* Dr. Johnson, after saying that our sharpest sorrow arises from the loss of those we have loved with tenderness, remarks, "Friendship between mortals can be contracted on no other terms, than that one must some time mourn for the other's death;" and he feelingly adds, "This grief will always yield to the survivor one consolation proportionate to his affliction; *for the pain, whatever it may be, that he himself feels, his friend has escaped.*"—*Rambler*, No. 17. This number can not be too diligently read, as also Nos. 71, 78, and 203.

friends, the pains, the groans, the dying strife, the destruction of the body, the consigning of it to the lowly grave, the conversion of it into food for worms, their immediate access into the presence of Purity and Holiness, the judgment that follows after, doubts of their acceptance with God, uncertainties about their future state, is there not enough here to try all their confidence and courage?"

## CHAPTER XXII.

### CLOSE OF DR. JOHNSON'S LIFE—HIS CALMNESS IN DEATH.

Many persons are fearful only of the bodily pang of death. This is the ignobler fear: and hence we find that criminals, and others who have no acute sense of religion, when they once from surrounding circumstances and sensations overcome this fear, have nothing else to call forth or stimulate that passion. We are told of a king of France (Louis IX.) who had a great fear of the physical pain of death. He once stopped a priest, who, after praying for the welfare of his body, was commencing prayer for the salvation of his soul. "Hold, hold," cried the king, "you have gone far enough for once. Never be tiresome in your address to God Almighty. Stop now, and pray for my *soul another time*." One of his physicians, Jacques Costier, governed him through this fear. He was used to say, "One of these days you will send *me* packing, I suppose, as I have seen you act by your other servants: but, mark my words, if you *do*, you will not live eight days after it." The king not only kept him about his majesty's person, but loaded him with gifts in order to appease his menaces. Doctor Johnson's fear was, as we must perceive, wholly connected with the state after death, as involved in the decree of Him who hath power to cast both body and soul into hell.

He tells us this in the Rambler:* "Milton," he says, "has judiciously represented the father of mankind as seized with horror and astonishment at the sight of death, exhibited to him on the Mount of Vision. For, surely, nothing can so much disturb the passions or perplex the intellects of man as the disruption of his union with visible nature: a separation from all that has hitherto delighted or engaged him: a change

* No. 78.

not only of the place, but of the manner of his being: an entrance into a state not simply which he knows not, but which perhaps he has not faculties to know: an immediate and perceptible communication with the Supreme Being, *and, what is above all distressful and alarming, the final sentence, and unalterable allotment.*" It is this that causes the dying terrors of persons eminent for piety and innocence,* while the stupid, the ignorant, and the brutal exhibit no concern: it is this which, though death may, through its forgetfulness, be defied in the field, often brings fear when it approaches the bed of sickness in its natural horror.†

At length he who had adopted the proverb of Solon, *Keep thine eye fixed upon the end of life*, as also another saying of one of the ancients, that *death is of dreadful things the most dreadful:* he who himself said,‡ "He that considers how soon he must close his life, will find nothing of so much importance as to close it well;" and again, although he thought it injurious§ to be always pondering upon death, "to neglect at any time preparation for death, is to sleep on our post at a siege, but to omit it in old age, is to sleep at an attack;"‖ he who with all his gloomy terrors of death, yet thought all earthly reputation to be a meteor, and that no one ray of comfort could issue from this world to cheer the gloom of the last hour, and said,¶ that when all failed, "futurity has still its prospects; there is yet happiness in reserve, which, if we transfer our attention to it, will support us in the pains of disease, and the languor of decay," and that this happiness might be attained by all that sincerely desired and earnestly pursued it, therefore on it alone, as beyond the power of chance, every mind ought finally to rest—we shall now see how he comported himself, when, at an advanced age, *the silver cord must be loosed, the golden bowl be broken,* when *man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets.*

* Rambler, No. 31.

† No. 203. See also Nos. 28 and 29. ‡ No. 17.

§ He said to Boswell, "If one was to think constantly of death, the business of life would stand still."

‖ Rambler, No. 78. ¶ Ibid. No. 203.

## THE DEATH OF DR. JOHNSON.

The circumstances most to be noted in connection with the last days of this great and good man are those which relate to his piety, his prayers, his advice to friends, his ultimate calmness in death. On the 20th day of November, 1784, Mr. Hoole, whose account is a very interesting one, found him very ill, and greatly depressed in spirits. But, like David, when in dejection, he thought upon the Lord. "We had," says Mr. H., "a most affecting conversation on the subject of religion, in which he exhorted me, with the greatest warmth of kindness, to attend closely to every religious duty, and particularly enforced the obligation of private prayer and receiving the sacrament." He lamented his own neglect of reading the Bible (though, as we have seen, he was often engaged in its perusal), and conjured Mr. Hoole to read and meditate upon it, and not to throw it aside for a play or novel.

His own belief in the Sacred Scriptures we know to be firm. Some days after, he said to Mr. Windham, "For revealed religion there was such historical evidence, as, upon any subject not religious, would have left no doubt." And again, with respect to evidence, he observed, "We had not such evidence that Cæsar died in the capitol, as that Christ died in the manner related."

He pressed Mr. Hoole to remain that night, and join in prayer with him. He begged him repeatedly to let his present situation have due effect upon him, and Mr. H. writes, "He said many things that I can not now recollect, but all delivered with the utmost fervor of religious zeal and personal affection." His servant Francis then came up, and Dr. Johnson said they would all go to prayers, on which they knelt by his bedside, while he repeated several prayers with great devotion.

On the next day Mr. Hoole called, and found him more cheerful, and he put into Mr. H.'s hands a little book by Fleetwood on the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, which he said he had been the means of introducing to the University of Oxford.

On the five following days Mr. Hoole called, and on the 27th he went to the Rev. Mr. Strahan's of Islington, suffering greatly from asthma, and there he seems to have made his will, which is dated, as being signed and sealed, December the 7th. This document, we may observe, is remarkable for the evidence it affords, in few words, of the testator's faith, hope, and charity. His faith and hope will be seen at once by the introductory declaration, thus written : "In the name of God. Amen. I, Samuel Johnson, being in full possession of my faculties, but *fearing this night may put an end to my life*, do ordain this my last will and testament. *I bequeath to God a soul polluted by many sins, but I hope purified by Jesus Christ :*" and his charity is proved by the nature of the will itself, especially in the cases of Mr. Innys and his servants, together with the codicil attached, which bears date of December 9th.

There has been a discussion respecting the sense in which Dr. Johnson used the word "polluted," and it has been contended, from his former mention of the term, that he did not intend it to be taken in its extreme application : but the controversy is not worth a moment's consideration, and let us rather hope that he did wish to use it in its utmost strength of meaning, although we know that he was often harassed with mere scruples of conscience, and made it a part of a solemn prayer, that he "might overcome and suppress vain scruples."

Several months before, in a conversation with Sir John Hawkins, he reasoned thus on the estimation of his offenses : "Every man knows his own sins, and also what grace he has resisted. But to those of others, and the circumstances under which they were committed, he is a stranger ; he is, therefore, to look on himself as the greatest sinner that he knows of." And at the conclusion of this argument, which he strongly enforced, he uttered this passionate exclamation : "Shall I, who have been a teacher of others, myself be a castaway !" The next day after this conversation he spent in fasting, humiliation, and such other devotions as became a man dangerously ill, having, in order to prevent interruption, told his servant Frank not to admit any one to him ; and

the better to enforce the charge, had added these awful words, "For your master is preparing himself to die!"

On Sunday the 28th of November, Mr. Hoole and others were with him. Hearing that Mrs. Hoole was in the next room, he desired to see her, and receiving her with great affection, took her by the hand, and said, "I feel great tenderness for you; think of the situation in which you see me, profit by it, and God Almighty keep you, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen." Upon Mr. Hoole almost immediately saying, that Dr. Heberden would be with him that morning, his answer was, "God has called me, and Dr. Heberden comes too late."

The Rev. Dr. Taylor of Ashbourn read prayers with him; and Mr. Hoole and Mr. Sastres (an Italian master) remained with him for the evening. To the latter, after some kind words about his profession, he said, "Let me exhort you always to think of my situation, which must one day be yours: always remember that life is short, and that eternity never ends! I say nothing of your religion (Roman Catholic); for if you conscientiously keep to it, I have little doubt but you may be saved: if you read the controversy, I think we have the right on our side; but if you do not read it, be not persuaded from any worldly consideration to alter the religion in which you were educated: change not, but from conviction of reason."

With what genuine liberality and honesty of mind did he speak! He then most strongly enforced the motives of virtue and piety from the consideration of a future state of reward and punishment, and concluded with, "Remember all this, and God bless you!"

On this evening Sir John Hawkins saw him. His dissolution was a subject of fear to him. He was dozing, and waking up among his friends, said, "You see the state in which I am: conflicting with bodily pain and mental distraction while you are in health and strength, labor to do good, and avoid evil, if ever you hope to escape the distress that now oppresses me." A little while after, he observed, "I had very early in my life, the seeds of goodness in me: I had a love of virtue, and a reverence for religion: and these, I trust,

have brought forth in me fruits meet for repentance: *and if I have repented as I ought*, I AM FORGIVEN." Yes, when we think of the prescience of the eternal Mind, he was authorized, without the common feelings of presumption, in speaking thus in the present tense, seeing that he spoke conditionally and not absolutely. He continued, "I have at times entertained a loathing of sin and of myself, particularly when I had the prospect of death before me: and this has not abated when my fears of death have been less: and at these times I have had such rays of hope shot into my soul, as have almost persuaded me that I am in a state of reconciliation with God." Who can say that the Almighty, in his gracious goodness, did not send these feelings into Dr. Johnson's soul, for the purpose of cheering and comforting one too depressed, but not with the intention that they should be received as his fiat of forgiveness. A weaker or more enthusiastic mind would have made more of these than it might be warranted to do, but Johnson knew too well the fallacious nature of impressions, and therefore would receive them with more of thankfulness than presumption. Yet, we speak as worms, for how know we the mind of God? We can only be guided by His word, which tells us of forgiveness of all sins on worthy repentance and faith, and of these availing us in the day of judgment through the atonement of our blessed Redeemer.

On the two following days Sir J. Hawkins found him more cheerful. On the 29th (Monday) Mr. Hoole called with his son, a clergyman, and Dr. Johnson appointed Wednesday for the latter to come and read the litany. On this day Sir Joshua Reynolds was with him, and then, or more probably on December 5th, he requested three things of the eminent artist, viz., to forgive him thirty pounds which he had borrowed of him, for he wanted to leave them to a distressed family: to read the Bible, especially not to omit doing so on a Sunday; and never to use his pencil on a Sunday. Sir Joshua, records Boswell, readily acquiesced; while Mrs. H. More says, that he felt no difficulty except upon this last request, but that at length Sir Joshua gratified him in all. Dr. Johnson always reverenced the Sabbath, and

on one occasion said to Hannah More, when importuned to speak well of an agreeable man, "Child," said he, "I will not speak any thing in favor of a Sabbath-breaker, to please you, nor any one else."

On this evening he was much cheered by Mr. Langton (an accomplished scholar himself) reminding him of the general tendency of his writings and example—the Mr. Langton with whom he had been long intimate, and to whom he affectionately said, "Te teneam moriens deficiente manu." He had come to London, and taken private lodgings, on purpose to be with Dr. Johnson in his illness.

On November 30th, Mr. Hoole, Mr. Langton, and others, were with him. He came from his chamber rather cheerful, and said to them, while they sat at their coffee, "Dear gentlemen, how do you do?" He repeated a poem that he had written some years before. It was then that on opening a note brought by his servant, he said, "An odd thought strikes me; we shall receive no letters in the grave." His talk, says Mr. H., was in general very serious and devout, though occasionally cheerful: he said, "You are all serious men; I will tell you something. About two years since, I feared that I had neglected God, and that I had not a *mind* to give Him; on which I set about to read Thomas à Kempis in Low Dutch, which I accomplished, and thence I judged that my mind was not impaired, Low Dutch having no affinity with any of the languages I knew." He seemed to think his recovery hopeless; and Sir John Hawkins found him cheerful.

On the Sunday following, the Sacrament was administered to him by the Rev. Mr. Strahan. Several partook of the sacred elements with him. Previous to reading the exhortation, he knelt, and "with a degree of fervor," says Sir J. Hawkins, "that I never was witness to before, uttered the following eloquent and most energetic prayer:

"'Almighty and most merciful Father, I am now, as to human eyes it seems, about to commemorate for the last time the death of thy Son Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Redeemer. Grant, O Lord, that my whole hope and confidence may be in His merits and in Thy mercy: forgive and accept my late

conversion: enforce and accept my imperfect repentance: make this commemoration of Him available to the confirmation of my faith, the establishment of my hope, and the enlargement of my charity; and make the death of Thy Son Jesus effectual to my redemption. Have mercy upon me, and pardon the multitude of my offenses. Bless my friends; have mercy upon all men. Support me by the grace of Thy Holy Spirit in the days of weakness, and at the hour of death, and receive me, at my death, to everlasting happiness, for the sake of Jesus Christ. Amen.'"

May we not pronounce the above prayer to be as nearly perfect as we can conceive a prayer, suitable to this occasion, to be. It must have been premeditated; its fullness and conciseness proclaim it as too good, and too exact, for an extemporaneous effusion. Like other of his prayers, it reminds us of the comprehensive and chastened quality of those in our Book of Common Prayer. No infidel could take such a prayer on his lips; no hypocrite could utter it; it is the prayer of the humble and sincere believer in the atonement of Jesus Christ, the only Saviour of the soul; it is the petition of one convinced that death is nigh, yet calm in the exercise of his reason, feeling that the almighty Mind must uphold and guide him to the last moment of his life.

During the administration of this sacrament, he repeatedly desired Mr. Strahan to speak louder; seeming very anxious, says Mr. Hoole, not to lose any part of the service, in which he joined in very great fervor of devotion. Upon rising from his knees, he said that he dreaded to meet God in a state of idiocy, and that he had taken some opium to enable him to support the fatigue; but he doubted if his exertions were the genuine operations of his mind, and repeated from Bishop Taylor, this sentiment, "That little that has been omitted in health can be done to any purpose in sickness."

On Mr. Ryland calling on him afterward, he remarked, "I have taken my viaticum; I hope I shall arrive safe at the end of my journey, and be accepted at last." He spoke despondingly several times. Mr. Ryland comforted him, observing, that "we had great hopes given us." "Yes," he

replied, "we have hopes given us; but they are conditional, and I know not how far I have fulfilled those conditions." He afterward said, "However, I think that I have now corrected all bad and vicious habits."

Often in the course of his illness he repeated the last concluding words of Izaak Walton's Life of Bishop Sanderson; and, indeed, there were some important resemblances between him and this humble, sincere, and simple-hearted prelate.

This Sunday evening was closed with prayer by Dr. Johnson, in the most fervent and affecting manner, "his mind appearing wholly employed with the thoughts of another life."

It was about this time that our dying hero, for we can call him nothing else, asked Dr. Brocklesby, whom he had endeavored to confirm in the truths of Christianity, to tell him plainly whether he should recover. "*Give me*," he said, "*a direct answer.*" The doctor having asked him if he could bear the whole truth, which way soever it might lead, and being answered that he could, declared that, in his opinion, he could not recover without a miracle. "Then," said Johnson, "I will take no more physic, not even my opiates; for I have prayed that I may render up my soul to God unclouded." If Johnson had not feared death, there would have been little bravery in this remark; but, with his known fear of the last enemy, it shows exceeding fortitude. Many persons wish to be told when they are in extreme danger, but few can bear the announcement when it is made. The late Queen Charlotte commanded Sir Herbert Taylor to inform her expressly of the time when the doctors in consultation gave up hopes of her recovery. He did so; and with some earnestness she exclaimed in alarm, "Sir Herbert has signed my death-warrant." It was evident that the intelligence hastened her end.

The Rev. Dr. Arnold, when seized with illness, fixed his eyes upon the physician, and asked whether an attack of that nature was not always fatal. The physician declared there was something in his earnest look that made him feel that he could not tell him a lie for the whole world; at once, therefore, he told him of his danger, and the doctor repeated

texts of Scripture, and set about dying with extraordinary composure.

It is pleasing to know, that at this time a good report of Dr. Johnson prevailed without. Hannah More had observed of him a few months before, that "he was very ill, and looked so dreadfully, that it quite grieved me. He is more mild and complacent than he used to be. His sickness seems to have softened his mind, without at all weakening it. I was struck with the mild radiance of this setting sun." Now she says: "Poor dear Johnson, he is past all hope. The dropsy has brought him to the point of death; his legs are scarified, but nothing will do. I have, however, the comfort to hear that his dread of dying is in a great measure subdued; and now he says, 'the bitterness of death is past.' How delighted should I be," she adds, "to hear the dying discourse of this great and good man, especially now that faith has subdued his fears. I wish I could see him."

To Dr. Brocklesby, Johnson said: "Doctor, you are a worthy man, but I am afraid you are not a Christian! What can I do better for you than offer up in your presence a prayer to the great God, that you may become a Christian in my sense of the word?" Instantly he fell on his knees and put up a fervent prayer. When he got up, he caught hold of his hand, with great earnestness, and cried, "Doctor, you do not say, Amen." After a pause, he cried, Amen! Johnson said, "My dear doctor, believe a dying man; there is no salvation but in the sacrifice of the Lamb of God. Go home, write down my prayer, and every word I have said, and bring it to me to-morrow." Brocklesby did so;* and Johnson bade him keep it in his own custody as long as he lived.

This account of Dr. Johnson is related by Dr. Brocklesby: "For some time before his death, all his fears, were calmed and absorbed by the prevalence of his faith, and his trust in the merits and *propitiation* of Jesus Christ.

"He talked often to me about the necessity of faith in the *sacrifice* of Jesus, as necessary beyond all good works whatever for the salvation of mankind.

* Life of Hannah More, vol. ii. p. 393.

"He pressed me to study Dr. Clarke and to read his sermons. I asked him why he pressed Dr. Clarke, an Arian. 'Because,' said he, 'he is fullest on the *propitiatory sacrifice*.'"

We find this subject alluded to in his conversation with others. On December 7th, Mr. Windham called upon him, and talked much with him. He presented the statesman with a copy of the New Testament, saying, "Extremum hoc munus morientis habeto." He requested him earnestly to become a protector to his servant, Francis Barber, and as a pledge of his kind guardianship, desired him to take his servant by the hand, while he (Dr. Johnson) repeated the recommendation he had just made, and Mr. Windham's promise to attend to it. Thus was Johnson faithful to the last to the poor and friendless, and Mr. Windham no less declared by his willing compliance his own acknowledged manliness of mind.*

Next ensued discourse upon the evidence for revealed religion, which we have related before. Of proofs to be derived from history, one of the most cogent, he seemed to

* For example of this, see Mr. Windham's published speeches in Parliament, delivered in the House of "Clinabs" (Commons), under the disguised name of "Gumdahm;" at least so was it in Dr. Johnson's days. Windham was one of the most eloquent of that respectable body of patriots that leagued together against Sir R. Walpole; who, while almost all the men of wit and genius opposed him, is said to have paid in vain above fifty thousand pounds to paltry scribblers in his defense.

An anecdote illustrative of a curious notion of liberty, is told in connection with Mr. Windham's name. "A Surrey magistrate told a friend of mine yesterday," says Wilberforce, "that some people met for a boxing match, and the magistrates proceeding to separate them, they threw their hats into the air, and declaring Mr. Windham had defended boxing in Parliament, cried out, 'Windham and Liberty.' A strange and novel association, by the way."

But Wilberforce could appreciate Windham's talent. On a visit to Fellrigg, he turned over with great interest in its library many of the books, which were "full of Windham's marks." "Windham's mind," he said, "was in the last degree copious; the soil was so fertile, scratch where you pleased, up came white clover. He had many of the true characteristics of a hero, but he had one great fault as a statesman—he hated the popular side of any question." How different to this is the manner of some statesmen of the present day. See "Memoirs of Wilberforce," by his Sons.

think, was the opinion so well authenticated, and so long entertained, of a deliverer that was to appear about that time. Among the typical representations, the sacrifice of the Paschal Lamb, in which no bone was to be broken, had early struck his mind. He implored Mr. Windham to keep holy the Sabbath-day. After alluding to the manifold and deep engagements of his political life, he said, that he did not condemn civil employment, but that it was a state of great danger, and that he had therefore one piece of advice earnestly to impress upon him, that he would set apart every seventh day for the care of his soul. "Such a portion of time," he remarked, "was surely little enough for the meditation of eternity." He himself loved to read only theological books on a Sunday, yet he was far from keeping the Pharisee's Sabbath, and once said admirably, on some person denouncing another for some lesser observance of the sacred day, "Whoever loads life with unnecessary scruples, provokes the attention of others on his conduct, and incurs the censure of singularity, without reaping the reward of superior virtue."

On this day, both Sir J. Hawkins and Mr. Hoole visited him. The former says, that Johnson wished an operation to be performed, and on Dr. Brocklesby saying that the surgeon was the best judge of that, he replied, "How many men in a year die through the timidity of those whom they consult for health! *I want length of life, and you fear giving me pain, which I care not for.*" Three days before, he had told Sir John that he was easier in his mind, and as fit to die that instant as he could be a year hence. Mr. Hoole found him in good spirits.

On December 8th, Mr. Hoole found him very poorly and low, after a bad night. The Rev. Mr. Hoole, who had been unremittingly attentive, read the litany, Dr. Johnson urging him to speak louder, while he himself made the responses in a deep and sonorous voice. After prayers, Mr. Langton came in, and much serious discourse followed. He warned all to profit by his situation, and exhorted Mr. Hoole to lead a better life than he had done. "A better life than you, my dear sir!" exclaimed Mr. H. Johnson replied warmly, "Don't compliment me now." He told Mr. Langton that

he had on the night before enforced on —— (evidently Mr. Windham) a powerful argument to a powerful objection against Christianity.

He then spoke on the Jews denying Christ, yet, after his death, raising a numerous church. Again he said, that he had always been struck with the resemblance of the Jewish passover and the Christian doctrine of redemption.

On this day, Sir J. Hawkins found him dictating another will. After it was done, he desired Mr. Strahan to say the Lord's Prayer, and then added some extemporaneous ejaculations of a pious kind.

Of the next three days nothing particular is recorded. He was in pain, and preserved his piety throughout. On the 9th Sir J. Hawkins found him composed and resigned. On the 11th he told Mr. Hoole, who had recommended an irregular physician, famous for curing the dropsy, "It was too late for doctors, *regular* or *irregular*." He said to Mr. Crickshanks, his medical man, "Come, give me your hand;" and having shaken it, added, "You shall make no other use of it now;" meaning, he should not examine his legs.

On December 12th Mr. Windham called at half-past seven, P.M., and staid till after eleven, though chiefly in the outer room. It was his endeavor to prevail on Johnson to take more nourishment; not, as he told him, "for the purpose of prolonging his life for a few hours or days," but that "he might preserve his faculties entire to the last moment." Johnson, however, resolute in his denial of opiates, or any thing of an inebriating nature, begged that there might be an end of this kind importunity. He then took leave of Windham, "with great fervor," says Mr. W., "in words which I shall, I hope, never forget; 'God bless you, my dear Windham, through Jesus Christ;' and concluding with a wish, 'that we might share in some humble portion of that happiness which God might finally vouchsafe to repentant sinners.'"

"These were the last words," adds Mr. Windham, "I ever heard him speak. I hurried out of the room with tears in my eyes, and more affected than I had ever been on any former occasion." Mr. Hoole tells us of this visit, and the Rev. Dr. Strahan was there a great length of time.

Mr. Windham called again, and heard of his state, and what he had been saying. Among other things, he insisted on the doctrine of an expiatory sacrifice, as the condition, without which there was no Christianity; and urged in support, the belief entertained in all ages, and by all nations, barbarous as well as polite.

From Mr. Windham's journal, the following entries are extracted: "December 13. Forty-five minutes past ten, P.M. While writing the preceding articles, I received the fatal account, so long dreaded, that Dr. Johnson was no more!

"May those prayers which he incessantly poured from a heart fraught with the deepest devotion, find their acceptance with Him to whom they were addressed—which piety, so humble and so fervent, may seem to promise."

"December 18.—For some days no work of any sort has been done. I can not, indeed, say that all the time has been misspent; much of it has been employed in performing the last duties of respect and affection to the great man who is gone."

"December 20th.—A memorable day; the day which saw deposited in Westminster Abbey the remains of Johnson."

On December 13th (1784), Mr. Hoole called, and found him composed. A young lady, the daughter of an old friend, had been permitted to see him, that she might earnestly request him to give her his blessing. The dying man turned himself in the bed, and said "God bless you, my dear!" These were the last words he spoke.* His difficulty of breathing increased till about seven o'clock in the evening, when Barber and Mrs. Desmoulins, who were sitting in the room, observing that the noise he had made in breathing had ceased, went to the bed, *and found* HE WAS DEAD!"

"We went into the chamber," says Mr. Hoole, "and there saw the most awful sight of Dr. Johnson laid out in his bed, without life."

Thus died Dr. Johnson, physically tranquil, as one going

* Sir J. Hawkins says, that, in his last moments, he uttered these words to Mr. Sastres, "*Jam moriturus*," and at a quarter past seven, he had, without a groan, or the least sign of pain or uneasiness, yielded his last breath.

off into a placid sleep. Nor was his mind, we may conceive, less composed. "He will not leave," exclaimed Hannah More, "an abler defender of religion and virtue behind him; and he who so tenderly insisted on a year's widowhood in his Literary Club ere a successor to Garrick should be named, has himself nigh caused a continued widowhood in the world."

Of his last days, Boswell's brother has made this record. "The doctor, from the time he was certain his death was near, appeared to be perfectly resigned; was seldom or never fretful or out of temper, and often said to his faithful servant, who gave me this account, 'Attend, Francis to the salvation of your soul, which is the object of greatest importance;' he also explained to him passages in the Scripture, and seemed to have pleasure in talking on religious subjects."

The Honorable John Byng, in a letter to Mr. Malone, states, that he had a long conversation with Cawston, who sat up with Dr. Johnson the whole of Sunday night, and who says, that the doctor "was perfectly composed, steady in hope, and resigned to death. . . . At the interval of each hour they assisted him to sit up in his bed, and move his legs, which were in much pain; when he regularly addressed himself to fervent prayer; and though sometimes his voice failed him, his sense never did, during that time. He said his mind was prepared, and the time to his dissolution seemed long. . . . Cawston says, that no man could appear more collected, more devout, or less terrified at the thoughts of the approaching minute."

Sir John Hawkins writes (after saying, however heroic an undaunted death may appear, it is not what we should pray for), "As Johnson lived the life of the righteous, his end was that of a Christian: he strictly fulfilled the injunction of the Apostle, to work out his own salvation with fear and trembling; and though his doubts and scruples were certainly very distressing to himself, they gave his friends a pious hope, that he who added to almost all the virtues of Christianity that religious humility which its great Teacher inculcated, will, in the fullness of time, receive the reward promised to a patient continuance in well-doing."

We may well remember here some words of one his favor-

ite religious authors :* "Courage and bravery," says Law, "are words of a great sound, and seem to signify an heroic spirit; but yet, humility, which seems to be the lowest, meanest part of devotion, is a more certain argument of a noble and courageous mind."

It was such humility which made Charles Simeon abhor from his inmost soul a death-bed scene, and bade him remember how, the angels themselves vail their faces in the presence of the High and Holy One that inhabiteth eternity. It was such humility that led that eminent pastor, Jones of Nayland, not to apply St. Paul's words† to himself, but rather only to repeat those words which our blessed Lord used toward the woman with the box of ointment—and as she made an offering at the head of Christ, he would offer all he had at His feet! Joyous will it be for every man whose faith and work can justify a personal application of the simple announcement, to be uttered by Divine voice only, *He hath done what he could!*

Hannah More tells us,‡ as informed by the Rev. Mr. Storry, of Colchester, that Dr. Johnson, not to be comforted by the ordinary topics of consolation addressed to him, desired to see a clergyman, and particularly described the views and character of the person whom he wished to consult. After some consideration, a Mr. Winstanley was named, and the doctor requested Sir John Hawkins to write a note in his name, requesting Mr. Winstanley's attendance as a minister.

Mr. Winstanley,§ who was in a very weak state of health, was quite overpowered on receiving the note, and felt appalled

* Law's Serious Call, p. 450.

† See works of Rev. William Jones, M.A., vol. i. p. 40. The words of St. Paul were those in 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8, and are alluded to in a brief and humble letter to a dear friend.

‡ For this account see Memoirs of Hannah More, vol. i. p. 378, &c.

§ This was the Rev. Thomas Winstanley, Canon Residentiary of Peterborough, a Canon of St. Paul's, and Rector of St. Dunstan's in the East. He was an excellent preacher, but a man of most reserved and retired manners. Notwithstanding his studious and peaceful habits, he on three occasions exerted himself to the utmost in public; first, by advocating the cause of Admiral Byng, whom he considered unjustly condemned to death by the memorable court-martial; secondly, by endeavoring to save the life of Dr. Dodd, convicted of forgery; and thirdly,

by the very thought of encountering the talents and learning of Dr. Johnson. In his embarrassment, he went to his friend Colonel Pownall, and told him what had happened, asking at the same time for his advice how to act. The colonel, who was a pious man, urged him immediately to follow what appeared to be a remarkable leading of Providence, and for the time argued his friend out of his nervous apprehension: but after he had left Colonel Pownall, Mr. Winstanley's fear returned in so great a degree, as to prevail upon him to abandon the thought of a personal interview with Dr. Johnson. He determined in consequence to write him a letter; and part of that letter, as repeated by Mr. Storry to Hannah More, was as follows:

"Sir—I beg to acknowledge the honor of your note, and am very sorry that the state of my health prevents my compliance with your request; but my nerves are so shattered, that I feel as if I should be quite confounded by your presence, and instead of promoting, should only injure the cause in which you desire my aid. Permit me, therefore, to write what I should wish to say were I present. I can easily conceive what would be the subjects of your inquiry. I can conceive that the views of yourself have changed with your condition, and that on the near approach of death, what you once considered mere peccadilloes have risen into mountains of guilt, while your best actions have dwindled into nothing. On whichever side you look, you see only positive transgressions or defective obedience; and hence, in self-despair, are eagerly inquiring, 'What shall I do to be saved?' I say to you, in the language of the Baptist, 'Behold the Lamb of God!'" &c.

When Sir John Hawkins came to this part of Mr. Win-

by advocating the repeal of the laws against the Jews, disabling them from the exercise of civil rights. He was the author of the "Christian Calling," and of "Meditations," and in his latter days he had a strong leaning to what were called Evangelical principles.

He married the widow of Colonel Braithwaite; and I may be permitted to mention that the writer of this book is his great-grandson.

stanley's letter, Dr. Johnson interrupted him, anxiously asking, "*Does he say so?* Read it again! Sir John." Sir John complied; upon which Dr. Johnson said, "I must see that man; write again to him." A second note was accordingly sent; but even this repeated solicitation could not prevail over Mr. Winstanley's fears. He was led, however, to write again to the doctor, renewing and enlarging upon the subject of his first letter; and these communications, together with the conversation of the late Mr. La Trobe, who was a particular friend of Dr. Johnson, appear to have been blessed by God in bringing this great man to a renunciation of self, and a simple reliance on Jesus as his Saviour, thus also communicating to him that peace which he had found the world could not give, and which, when the world was fading from his view, was to fill the void, and dissipate the gloom, even of the valley of the shadow of death.

If this account be a true one, and if the letters of Mr. Winstanley were blessed to Dr. Johnson's soul, we have no reason to deplore his non-attendance; only remarking that such non-attendance was inexcusable save and except on the valid plea of ill-health and shattered nerves. Dr. Johnson, from the description evidently given him of this clergyman, would have expected much instruction and consolation from his presence; and it would have been sad, if, from bodily weakness, the powers of his mind had forsaken him; but still a minister of God is to go forth in prayer and hope, and venture to trust that strength will be granted him sufficient for the important duty he has undertaken in all humility.

Every clergyman may with propriety recollect, that the preparation for the future life is quite a different matter from the possession of great talents in the present time. Wilberforce speaks of the poem entitled the "Curse of Kehama," and describes it thus: "Imagination as wild as the winds; prodigious command of language, and the moral purity truly sublime; the finest ideas all taken from the Scriptures;" and he continues afterward, "Oh! what a consideration is it, that magnificent as are the visions of glory in which Southey's fancy revels, and which his creative genius forms, they are all beneath the simple reality of the Christian's hope, if he be

but duly impressed with it." Yes, truly, the Christian's hope is a simple, as it is a humbling possession: and the clergyman who should attend at the last on a Johnson or a Southey, need not be as profound in learning as the one, or as sublimely poetical as the other; neither would they themselves desire such qualities in their spiritual comforters, if their greatness be tempered with humility. The pastor is commissioned to open the Word of God, which is so far superior to any words of man; and from this he is authorized to draw his sublime yet simple lesson, a lesson which is not effectual unless it tend to debase the vanity of human talent, and tarnish every proud thought of moral excellence.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

### CONCLUSION.—CLOSE OF DR. JOHNSON'S LIFE.

We have now only to take a very brief review of Dr. Johnson's character, and of his death. All men that are in any degree acquainted with English literature, have heard the name of Dr. Johnson, and have perused his Works. He, like other foremost writers, had a style of his own—dangerous to imitate, and not, but for the excellence attained, and the weight of the moral sentiments conveyed by it, altogether acceptable for the improvement of our literature. He used to say of Addison, "He is the Raphael of Essay writers." and yet he himself in no way endeavored to adopt the elegant simplicity, and more idiomatic manner of Addison's writing. Johnson will always be regarded as the very antipodes of Addison. "Addison," says Murphy,* "lends grace and ornament to truth; Johnson gives it force and energy. Addison makes virtue amiable; Johnson represents it as an awful duty. Addison insinuates himself with an air of modesty: Johnson commands like a dictator; but a dictator in his splendid robes, not laboring at the plow. Addison is the Jupiter of Virgil, with placid serenity talking to Venus:

"Vultu quo cœlum tempestatesque serenat."

Johnson is Jupiter Tonans; he darts his lightning, and rolls his thunder, in the cause of virtue and piety. The language seems to fall short of his ideas; he pours along, familiarizing the terms of philosophy, with bold inversions, and sonorous periods: but we may apply to him what Pope has said of Homer: "It is the sentiment that swells and fills the dic-

* From an Essay on the Life and Genius of Dr. Johnson, by Arthur Murphy, Esq., a continued friend of Johnson's, and a member of the Essex Head Club.

tion, which rises with it, and forms itself about it; like glass in the furnace, which grows to a greater magnitude, as the breath within is more powerful, and the heat more intense." We may well think what those ideas must be, of which Johnson's language, so solemn, and so magnificent, falls short in the expression.

Another contemporary * alludes more particularly to the kindness and goodness that swayed Johnson's pen. After speaking of his poem "Irene," he says, "Together with the ablest head, he seems possessed of the very best heart at present existing. Every line, every sentiment that issues from his pen, tends to the great centre of all his views, the promotion of virtue, religion and humanity; nor are his actions less pointed toward the same great end. Benevolence, charity, and piety are the most striking features in his character; and while his writings point out to us what a good man ought to be, his own conduct sets us an example of what he is." It may be mentioned, that it is thought to be rather an instance of Johnson's jealousy, that when his intimate friend, Dr. Hawksworth, published his "Almoran and Hamet," Dr. Johnson, being asked if he had read the book, replied, as it is reported, "No! I like the man too well to read his book." It is very easy to give another and kinder interpretation to these words. Johnson was not jealous. "Little people," he says, "are apt to be jealous: but they should not be jealous; for they ought to consider, that superior attention will necessarily be paid to fortune or rank." Goldsmith was jealous on several occasions; but when it was intimated to Burke that some of the company, at a particular gathering, would as soon have heard him talk as have listened to Dr. Johnson, "Oh, no," said Burke, "it is enough for me to have rung the bell to him."

Alexander Chalmers depicts Johnson's rising in the world,† under the disadvantages of obscure birth and unprepossessing appearance and manners, as significative of the large powers within. "That such a man," he says, after setting forth some adverse qualities, "should have forced his way into the

* David Erskine Baker, Esq., in *Biographia Dramatica*.

† Chalmers's Biographical Dictionary, vol. xix. p. 74.

society of a greater number of eminent characters than perhaps ever gathered round an individual; that he should not only have gained but increased their respect to a degree of enthusiasm, and preserved it unabated for so long a series of years; that men of all ranks in life, and of the highest degree of mental excellence, should have thought it a duty, and found it a pleasure, not only to tolerate his occasional roughness, but to study his humor, and submit to his control, to listen to him with the submission of a scholar, and consult him with the hopes of a client—all this surely affords the strongest presumption that such a man was remarkable beyond the usual standard of human excellence." Johnson may have indeed been rough in personal appearance and occasional manners, but the world around him seems to have been of the same opinion with Bishop Horne,* when he so happily remarked of our literary hero, "To reject wisdom, because the person of him who communicates it is uncouth, and his manners are inelegant; what is it, but to throw away a fine apple, and assign for a reason the roughness of its coat?"

But we must recollect, that it was not only Dr. Johnson's intellect that invested him with the attractive powers described by Chalmers, but it was his religion also that endeared him to contemporary friends, and that will carry his name with honor and veneration to remotest posterities. No man more thoroughly exhibited in his person the power of a fixed belief in Christianity combined with strong natural sense and intellectual vigor, and the beneficial influence such a combination has upon the individual, and through him, upon mankind at large. In him was the union of Gospel light with intellectual light seen in more useful and efficient kind and degree than in our almost superhuman poet, Milton. It may be a question, indeed, whether Milton has done very much for the cause of religion, and whether the impersonation of Satan may not rather lead many minds into skepticism. But leaving such comparison, what a contrast is exhibited between Johnson and Voltaire. We find Johnson, throughout his whole career, swayed by the influence of fixed principles,

* In an Essay in the "Olla Podrida," by the Rev. Dr. Horne, the accomplished and pious Bishop of Norwich.

acting consistently and conscientiously under great infirmities. The paralytic affection under which he labored prevented Mr. Budworth from engaging him as an assistant, when Budworth was Master of the Grammar School at Brewood, from a fear, he said, "lest the boys should ridicule him, or imitate him." The independence of his career at Oxford: the distress he encountered at his outset in London, and the risk he ran, by his intimacy with Savage, of falling into vicious habits—the twenty-four years of severe labor and penury which he must have endured from the time that he left college until the period that his Dictionary was published—the melancholy produced and continued by his bodily affliction—and yet to know that during this time his filial piety, conjugal affection, kindnesses, charities, and a most noble independence of spirit, shone forth under every disadvantage and temptation; this must command our admiration, our respect, and love. Voltaire, endowed with fortune, station, easy temperament and genius of the first order—but destitute of religious feelings—living only to amuse and corrupt the world. Johnson in his humble dwelling living to instruct, exalt, and purify mankind. Johnson not leaving behind him a page or a sentence that deserved to be blotted out; and Voltaire scarcely leaving a page worthy to be preserved as contributing to the welfare of his fellow-creatures. Such in Johnson was the power and benefit of Christian principles in union with intellectual talents; and well does an excellent writer of modern date,* observe, "If there be on earth a character to which we are justified in looking with feelings of awe and admiration, it is to that which has united the acquisitions of learning, philosophy, and high-minded literature, to the far more valuable accompaniments of humble Christian piety; it is to the Miltons, the Pascals, the Newtons, the Lockes, the Addisons, the Johnsons: to men, who with a deeper insight into the mysteries of the material creation, into the various shades of the human character, and into the treasures of ancient literature, *than ever adorned the cause of infidelity*, looked up to the holy fountain of truth only, that they might worship, and

* Sermons on some of the Leading Principles of Christianity: by Bishop Shuttleworth. 1829. Second Edition, Serm. xviii. p. 498.

devote the whole efforts of their mighty minds *to the service of the religion, of purity, and of humility!*" Yes; Shuttleworth is right, such men as these advance the cause of you, O learned Andrewes; O blessed Ken; O holy Beveridge; O wise and sagacious Leslie;* and God be praised, your days are *not* past.

In Johnson was strength of character. He was poor, very poor, for a long period of his life; and even from the time of his obtaining his pension in the year 1763 (the year in which Boswell was introduced to him) to the day of his death, his circumstances, though easy, were not large, yet he never thrust forward this his poverty. He was not like Antisthenes, the affected philosopher, who was always, in company, turning the threadbare side of his garment outward, and which drew the cutting sarcasm from the wise and good Socrates, when he said to him, "Wilt thou never cease to expose thy pride and vanity?" No, his was the poverty that complained not, a courageous poverty, that rejects all aid and sympathy when itself can set to work. "Milton," he remarks,† in relating how the author of "Paradise Lost" also sought the office of a schoolmaster, "was not a man who could become mean by a mean employment:" and such may be said of Johnson all through his life, that no mean style of living could ever make him mean in his mind or heart. Anecdotes have served much to illustrate this part of his character. He must have been in his sterner humor, when he replied to Boswell's inquiry where Knox was buried, "I hope in the highway:" and when told that one of the steeples of ancient St. Andrews was in danger, wished it not to be taken down, "for," said he, "it may fall on some of the posterity of John Knox: and no great matter." But in a benignant and more usual mood, when, on its being said that Clarke was very wicked for going so much into the Arian system, he answered, "I will not say he was wicked, he might be mistaken." See how he settles the character of the eloquent and highly gifted Lord Bolingbroke, the idol of Dean Swift, Pope, and many more: "Sir," he said, "Bolingbroke was a scoundrel and a coward: a scoundrel, for charging a blunderbuss against

* See Jones's Works, vol. vi. p. 240. † In his Life of Milton.

religion and morality: a coward, because he had not resolution to fire it off himself, but left half-a-crown to a beggarly Scotchman to draw the trigger after his death." Of a more obscure person, who maintained there was no distinction between virtue and vice, he, in a common sense way, said, "When he leaves our house, let us count our spoons." How prostrate does he lay (as has been already alluded to) the celebrated Lord Chesterfield, in the letter addressed to him after his Dictionary had appeared! What a quietus, too, he gave to Macpherson, the publisher of "Ossian," and to Soame Jenyns, "Ha, I thought I had given *him* enough of it!" And yet what a branding wit in this "great and venerable" character: for what said Garrick of this majestic teacher of moral and religious wisdom? "Rabelais and all other wits," exclaimed the British Roscius, "are nothing compared with him. You may be diverted by them; but Johnson gives you a forcible hug, and shakes laughter out of you, whether you will or no." Christianity seems to have so softened his rugged nature, as well as exalted it, that while he beat down the proud and the strong, he was the unflinching friend of the poor, the humble, and the weak. No man ever put in practice more completely the sentiment, which so few have power to carry out, of that incomparable line of the Roman poet:

"Parcere subjectus, et debellare superbos."

See him in his own small house sheltering poor blind Mrs. Williams, poor Mrs. Desmoulins, poor Levett: and remember all his kindness and condescension to Francis Barber. See him befriending in their distress the Rev. Dr. Dodd, Baretti, and others: and think of that weeping, and praying, and parting with Catharine Chambers. Look to the innumerable Prefaces and Dedications to works of inferior authors, and his patience in correcting and counseling, yet scrupling not to tell a dunce that he was a dunce. See with what honest and hearty sympathy he befriended those who had labored under him in compiling his Dictionary. "Some of them," observes the Rev. J. S. M. Anderson,* "were engaged

* Addresses on Miscellaneous Subjects; address on Dr. Johnson, p. 87. By the Rev. James S. M. Anderson, of Brighton.

in literary undertakings on their own account; some were sick and weakly in body; all were poor. And in JOHNSON they all found a friend. He wrote for those to whom the service of his pen was useful; he visited those who were in sickness; yea, even out of his penury, he found means to alleviate the yet more pinching agony of their distress." Though rough to a few who required roughness, well might he be justified in saying, out of the promptings of the benevolent heart within, "I wonder how I should have any enemies; for I do harm to nobody."* Not only was his good nature manifest in the club room when crying out, "Who's for Poonsh?" but in the humble garret, or the chilling street, his charity was known. And like Melancthon, he could hold a book in one hand, and rock a cradle with the other: or, like Bishop Wilson, he could discourse moral thunder, and order penance and imprisonment, and yet be doling out an assortment of spectacles to needy old women,† who blessed even the passing shadow of the man.

His tour to the Hebrides shows him to have been a man

* On Johnson saying this, Boswell immediately remarked to him, "In the first place, sir, you will be pleased to recollect that you set out with attacking the Scotch; so you got a whole nation for your enemies." JOHNSON.—"Why, I own that by my definition of *Oats* I meant to vex them." BOSWELL.—"Pray, sir, can you trace the cause of your antipathy to the Scotch?" JOHNSON.—"I can not, sir." BOSWELL.—"Old Mr. Sheridan says, it was because they sold Charles the First." JOHNSON.—"Then, sir, old Mr. Sheridan has found out a very good reason."

Johnson's definition of OATS was, "A grain which in England is generally given to horses, but in Scotland supports the people." Lord Elibank made a happy retort on this; "Yes," said he, "and where else will you see *such horses* and *such* men?"

It was pleasant to Boswell, afterward, to find oats, the "food of horses" so much used as the "food of men" in Johnson's own town of Lichfield: there he saw *oat ale*, and oat cakes.

Dr. Johnson gave greater cause of offense, we should think, when he compared the learning of the Scotch as being like to "Bread in a besieged town; where every man gets a little, but no man gets a full meal." Yet he often complimented the Scotch clergy on their learning and information; and, at all events, his comparison would not apply in the present day.

† See Hugh Stowell's Life of Bishop Wilson, p. 88. See Alexander Knox's Remains, vol. ii. p. 301–304.

of great enterprise and courage, notwithstanding his infirmities, with a constant fear of God before his eyes. Thomson the poet, in London, could sing of rural scenes: but Johnson, whose heart was in London also, could travel into the rough places of the earth. Of one place in which he slept, he says, "I undressed myself, and felt my feet in the mire. The bed stood upon the bare earth, which a long course of rain had softened to a puddle."* He describes himself and party as always struggling with some obstruction or other: and we find him in places of which he says, any one might have wandered among the rocks till he had perished with hardship, before he could have found either food or shelter.† Yet he complained not: for instead of remembering his snug quarters in Bolt-court, or his love of contemplating the tide of human life in Fleet-street, he remarks, "Yet what are these hillocks to the ridges of Taurus, or these spots of wildness to the deserts of America?" Boswell made an apposite remark on one occasion when Johnson was placed upon one of the ponies called shelties, just caught wild from the heath, with a straw halter put upon its head: "I wish, sir," said Boswell, "*the club* saw you in this attitude." At another time there was no saddle or bridle for the sheltie, but only a halter, which made Dr. Johnson observe, that "he longed to get to a country of saddles and bridles." Yet, during all his difficulties and dangers, he behaved with great courtesy, and even delicacy, in the huts of the poorest persons: took pleasure in little things: noted down all the customs of the country: showed a minute knowledge of various arts: perused all the books he could get hold of: wrote Latin verses: ex-

* Boswell gives us a picture of an *up-stairs* room, which had some deals laid across the joists, as a kind of ceiling. There were two beds in the room, and a woman's gown was hung on a rope to make a curtain of separation between them. We had much hesitation, whether to undress, or to lie down with our clothes on. I said at last, "I'll plunge in; there will be less harbor for vermin about me when I am stripped." Dr. Johnson said, he was like one hesitating whether to go into a cold bath. At last he resolved to go. I observed he might serve a campaign. JOHNSON.—"I could do all that can be done by patience; whether I should have strength enough, I know not."

† His own account of his Journey, p. 88.

pressed many theological opinions: and fairly roughed it among a haughty people, tenacious of dignity; one of whom asked him if he was one of the *Johnstons* of Glencoe, or of Ardnamurchan! The author of the "Rambler" was as nobody.

Dr. Johnson's religion was evangelical, though not according to the modern conventional meaning of that term. He was more Arminian than Calvinistic; but we may best describe him as a man who looked for salvation, by the mercy of God, through faith in the atonement of our Lord Jesus Christ: and who would feel that good works were indispensable evidences of a genuine faith. Through the greater portion of his life religion was rather an awful than a pleasurable matter in his mind, and hence Bishop Jebb has been led to remark,* "To multitudes that are *both honest and serious*, religion is not pleasurable: it is a thing to them unmixedly awful: they never dream of seeking recreation from it; they hold it as a solemn, but rather painful duty, and they get away from it as soon as they can. Such people do not, and can not, taste the beauties of Scripture: yet they have real, though, doubtless imperfect faith. Doctor JOHNSON was of this number: what he writes of the Paradise Lost, he would have said of Scripture, if reverence permitted 'Its perusal is a duty rather than a pleasure. We read Milton for instruction, retire harassed and over-burdened, and look elsewhere for recreation; we desert our master and seek for companions.' But, by those whose faith is strong, whose religious views are bright and cheerful, &c. &c., of such men the sacred volume will become the chosen pleasure-ground."

The late lamented Bishop Shirley, who was one of the best specimens of the (so called) evangelical school, also gives this opinion,† "I think that JOHNSON was an example of a man who was aiming at details rather than principles in religion. He was dissatisfied with the "corrupt fruit," and pruned the branches, and was still dissatisfied, because more corrupt fruit was again produced: and all was struggle, and sorrow, and bondage. He forgot that, as a Christian, he

* Life of Bishop Jebb, Letter lxvi.

† Memoirs of Bishop Shirley, by Archdeacon Hill, p. 425. This is a pleasing memoir, filled with refined sentiments.

was not under the law, but under grace; and it was not until that grace (the mercy of God in Christ) got possession of his soul, and drove him toward God in harmony of mind, by its assimilating influence, that he had peace, or joy, or liberty, or spiritual power to have victory, and to triumph over the world, the flesh, and the devil." Dr. Shirley can not but allow that all was well at the last with Dr. Johnson; but neither he nor Bishop Jebb sufficiently remark on the constraining and directing power of his religious principles —for *principles* of the most influencing kind he undoubtedly cherished in his heart of hearts. He was a great and awful man in every thing that he undertook—in conversation, in writing, in duty—and the same spirit that nerved him in these, accompanied him also in his religion; which in him was real, was commanding, was lasting; and if the garment was of sombre hue, its texture was enduring, and always fit for service. "The hope of the Christian was his," says the Rev. Mr. Anderson, "and its reality was then" (in his last illness) "proved."

We have shown that his religion was in accordance with the spirit of the Church of England—humbling, yet edifying. In defense of written prayers he utters this admirable sense:* "It is now universally confessed, that men pray as they speak on other occasions, according to the general measure of their abilities and attainments. Whatever each may think of a form prescribed by another, he can not but believe that he can himself compose by study and meditation a better prayer than will rise in his mind at a sudden call: and if he has any hope of supernatural help, why may he not as well receive it when he writes as when he speaks?" In his Sermons written for Dr. Taylor, we find most excellent sentiments and sterling sense; sentiments and sense that in this our day are being revived;† and if with moderation

* In his "Journey to the Western Islands," p. 244.

† We may be reminded of a smart epigram in this place—

"The antiquarian's skill, how bright!
Who out of *darkness* formeth *light*:
And makes this contradiction true,
That something *old* is *something new*.

*Gentleman's Magazine*, 1782, p. 40.

and discretion, can not fail to strengthen the hands of the church and her sound and genuine Christianity. How wisely does he speak of the study of antiquity! "The study of antiquity is laborious," he says,* "and to despise what we can not, or will not understand, is a much more expeditious way to reputation." Again: "With regard to the order and government of the Primitive church, we may doubtless follow their (the Ancient Christians') authority with perfect security; they could not possibly be ignorant of laws executed, and customs practiced, by themselves; nor would they, even supposing them corrupt, serve any interests of their own, by handing down false accounts to posterity. We are therefore to inquire from them, the different orders established in the ministry from the Apostolic ages: the different employments of each, and their several ranks, subordinations, and degrees of authority. From their writings, *we are to vindicate the establishment of our church, and by the same writings are those who differ from us, in these particulars, to defend their conduct.*" Yes; to this touchstone we must come to seek for the practical in proof of the speculative. And how wholesome is this rule, and most confounding to the Church of Rome; "Every thing that was declared by the inspired writers to be necessary for salvation, must have been carefully recorded, and therefore what we find no traces of in the Scripture, or in the early Fathers, as most of the peculiar tenets of the Romish church, must certainly be concluded to be not necessary. Thus, by consulting first the Holy Scriptures, and next the writers of the Primitive church, we shall make ourselves acquainted with the will of God: thus shall we discover the good way, and find that rest for our souls which will amply recompense our studies and inquiries." This is the way to be settled and grounded in the truth; and "when I think of these things," says Alexander Knox of unstable views of men, "how I rejoice in my settledness."

Speaking of sects in religion, in another Sermon,† he observes with acute discernment, "He whose opinions are

* Vol. i. Serm. vii. p. 154, &c.

† Sermon xi. vol. i. p. 226.

censured, feels the reputation of his understanding impaired; he, whose party is opposed, finds his influence resisted, and perhaps his power, or his profit, in danger of diminution." This is said of the proud sectarian; but he goes on to remark, "That men of different opinions should live at peace, is the true effect of that humility, which makes each esteem others better than himself, and of that moderation, which reason approves, and charity commands." He then counsels Christians, in the words of his text, to *be all of one mind*, and certainly unity must be looked to as the grand preservative of the Christian religion. "My regard for unity," said the intellectual and saint-like Fletcher of Madeley, at a time when he was thought to be in the last stage of a consumption, "recovers my drooping spirits, and adds new strength to my wasted body; I stop at the brink of the grave, over which I bend, and, as the blood oozing from my decayed lungs does not permit me vocally to address my contending brethren, by means of my pen I will ask them, if they can properly receive the Holy *Communion* while they *willfully* remain in *disunion* with their brethren, from whom controversy has needlessly parted them?"* And the celebrated Adam Clarke enjoyed a uniting spirit,† though he was not in union with the church, the *res angusta domi* having alone prevented his being brought up as a clergyman of the Church of England. "Of the Established Church," he writes,‡ "I have never been a secret enemy, nor a silent friend. What I feel toward it, the angels are welcome to ponder: and what I

* Southey's Life of Wesley, vol. ii. p. 382.

† The pious Bishop Shirley, than whom few men were in the way of greater experience in the matter, while he states, that "the clergy of the Church of England are gaining year by year in spirituality, devotedness, and power;" bears this melancholy testimony; "The Dissenters are shrinking into rancorous sectarian agitators." It is probable, that some value politics more than religion, and would

> "Pour the sweet milk of concord into Hell,
> Uproar the universal peace, confound
> *All unity on earth.*"

But to such let Dr. Adam Clarke's censure on political preaching be strongly recommended.

‡ See his admirable letter to the Bishop of London, in his own Memoirs.

have spoken or written concerning it, and in its favor, I believe I shall never be even tempted to retract. Being bred up in its bosom, I early drank in its salutary doctrines and spirit;" and he proceeds to say as much in deep regard for "Mother Church," as he terms it, as Dr. Johnson himself could have expressed in his hours of most cordial attachment and warmth. And as Adam Clarke held kindly feelings toward the church, so Dr. Johnson was not unfrequently liberally inclined toward those who differed from him. When visiting an aged and venerable Presbyterian minister (Maclean) in Scotland, he records, "I lost some of his good-will, by treating a heretical writer with more regard than, in his opinion, a heretic could deserve:" and he adds of Mr. Maclean himself, "I honored his orthodoxy, and did not much censure his asperity." The heresy must have been on some point on which Churchman and Presbyterian were agreed. The Church of England can well afford to be generous: she is founded on a rock from whence she can, with every advantage to herself, extend a hand of sympathy and help to the weaker and less discreet. "*We do not render evil for evil,*" observes the Rev. Mr. Agutter,* who preached a funeral sermon in the University of Oxford, on the death of Dr. Johnson, "we grant the Romanist a toleration, which, if they had the supremacy they would not grant to us. We do not remember and repay the violence and the oppression which the Church of England was once made to suffer, when the Dissenters had the upper hand." But, after all, Johnson's religion was not a religion of hostility to Romanism or Dissent, so much as it was a religion that craved after a good life, and sought the salvation of the soul through the faith that is in Christ Jesus. What he says of Dr. Sydenham, might have been written of himself, and far more: namely, that "his chief view was the benefit of mankind, and the chief motive of all his actions the will of God, whom he mentions with reverence, well becoming the most enlightened and penetrating mind!

We can least support Dr. Johnson in his fear of death, or rather of eternity. The fear of death is implanted in the

* Sermons on Various Occasions, by Rev. William Agutter, p. 240.

nature of man for sufficient reasons, but it is to be overcome by the Christian, and we dare not lower the standard of Christian joy and peace. Men commonly do not like to think of death, neither do they desire to be told of its preparatory warnings and weaknesses. When Gil Blas had obtained the situation of private secretary, &c. to the Archbishop of Grenada, and by his admiration of his patron's sermons and discourses had become his factotum, the Archbishop desired him to let him know when he perceived his Grace to fall off in his energetic addresses. The archbishop has an apoplectic attack from which he partially recovers so as to be able to preach, but preaches very indifferently. Gil Blas, according to order, ventures to take an opportunity of mentioning to his Grace that he perceived a diminution of strength and vigor in his discourses. The archbishop receives the intimation quietly, but sends Gil Blas to his treasurer to receive a hundred ducats, and thus dismisses him, "Adieu, Mr. Gil Blas, I wish you all possible prosperity with a little more *good taste*."*

Dr. Johnson's fear of death might arise from either of two causes, or from both combined—a constitutional temperament, in which he is the object of pity rather than of admiration—all his lifetime subject to bondage through this fear of death—or else a deficiency of faith in the goodness and mercy of God in Christ Jesus. The latter view we may presume is much established by the fact that, as his end drew near, and his faith was strengthened, he seems to have viewed it with far less dread: and we may think, too, it is naturally enough inferred from the way in which he spoke of the "work of righteousness," as if it were more the result of his own efforts than of the gift of God. We can not help supposing that a more correct and lively apprehension of Ephes. ii. 8, would have been the true and effectual remedy for all his fears. Let us, in all tenderness, consider it as a weakness to be pitied, and not an imitable excellence. Undoubtedly it would not affect his salvation. Charles Simeon,

* "Je vous souhaite toutes sortes de prosperité avec un peu plus de goût."—*Gil Blas*, vol. iii. 12mo. edition.

in writing of a person who had made use of some very hopeful terms in her last hours, says,* "I lay no stress on those expressions of hope which I have been speaking of, as though *they were necessary to her salvation;*" yet he hailed them with joy as coming from one exceedingly diffident of her state. And of himself he said, in an admirable letter to the Bishop of Calcutta, "I long to be in my proper place, my hand on my mouth, and my mouth in the dust. I would rather have my seed-time here, and wait for my harvest until I myself am carried to the granary of heaven. I feel this to be safe ground. Here I can not err."† And of the doctrine of assurance, Wesley said,‡ "Some are fond of this expression: I am not: I hardly ever use it . . . . . I believe a few, but very few, Christians have an assurance from God of everlasting salvation; and this is the thing which the Apostle terms the 'plerophory,' or full assurance of hope." The profound and philosophical Cudworth, in a sermon on John ii. 3,§ says, "The best assurance that any one can have of his interest in God is the conformity of his soul to God:" and, in like manner, Dr. Hampden (Bishop of Hereford) says, "The reality of the Divine presence by the Spirit with the believer, must not be confounded with the gross imaginations of the heart of man. Their feeling of joy is the *result* of conduct, harmonizing with their belief, and strengthening their belief by its accordance. It is not the work of a moment—but of days—of years."‖ This is the true ground of assurance, but even this Dr. Johnson had not vividly and continually. Therefore was his happiness impaired. Let us not be accessory to an impression, that a *low* state of love, and joy, and peace, is *intended* to be the Christian's position upon earth. Undoubtedly it often is so. But whenever it is, is it not usually (except in constitutionally exempt cases) resolvable into want of faith, or inconsistency of conduct? Of this we may be confident, as we can be of any thing we

* Simeon's Memoirs, 3d edition, p. 181. † Page 489.

‡ Southey's Life of Wesley, vol. ii. p. 182.

§ The doctrine of Assurance, by the way, is untenable by this text, which is often adduced in its favor; it has nothing to do with it.

‖ Parochial Sermons. By Rev. Renn D. Hampden, p. 112.

know, that, making every allowance for all sorts and kinds of depression, the state of feeling which is both commanded to every Christian, and promised also, and uniformly represented as attainable, and as actually attained by many, is one far more happy than can be consistent with Dr. Johnson's fears. It is evident that he did not rejoice in the Lord alway—that he did not walk through the valley of the shadow of death without fearing evil—that the presence of the Holy Spirit in his character of Comforter was not greatly vouchsafed to him; and, in all sincerity, we must not hold up this state of mind as an example, but rather as a warning to others. We must not be dazzled by his superior talents and moral excellency so as to suppose that this defect is necessary or imitable. Probably if he could *now* express his own altered sentiments, he would at once denounce himself as one "of little faith," who never needed to have had this cause to "doubt," but was led to do so by disproportionate attention to the obligations of man, as compared with the goodness, and sufficiency, and imparted power of the all-sufficient Saviour.

Still let no man presume, let no man censure Dr. Johnson, for great light was within him, and his love to his fellow-creatures certainly sprang out of his love to God. Let not the multitude who have feelings of assurance, *sudden* as they are *groundless*, lift up their heads and imagine themselves to be something when they are nothing. "The valet," says Carlyle, "does not know a hero when he sees him." Doctor Johnson was entitled to far greater degrees of happy feeling than he actually possessed, or his humility and sense of unworthiness would permit him to express. "A noble unconsciousness is in him. He does not engrave *Truth* on his watch seal: no, but he stands by truth, speaks by it, works and lives by it."* See him in the Church of St. Clement Danes,† pronouncing "with tremulous earnestness," the awful petition in the Liturgy: "In the hour of death, and at the day of judgment, good Lord, deliver us!" and all through

* Carlyle's Heroes and Hero Worship, p. 289.

† "That church of St. Clement Danes," observes Carlyle, p. 283, "where Johnson still worshiped IN THE ERA OF VOLTAIRE, *is to me a venerable place.*"

life endeavoring to attain the reality of religion; and attaining it too, though not in all its freedom and joy. Yet was this great mournful Johnson a right valiant man.* He sought virtue, and without virtue there is not evidence of a sincere faith. "Be good, be virtuous, my lord, you must come to this;" were among the last words of the converted Lord Lyttelton to Lord Valentia. "We must all come to this," was ever Johnson's reflection on witnessing a death-bed, or hearing of death, and it was the voice that went forth from his own dying hour. Yet full as he was of good works, he did not say with Bishop Pearce (it may be harmlessly enough), on being asked one day how he could live with so little nutriment, "I live," said the bishop, "upon the recollection of an innocent and well spent life, which is my only sustenance."† Let not this be despised, for doubtless the bishop reviewed his past life in the spirit of the twelfth and thirteenth articles of the Church of England. In such a spirit spake the pious George Herbert on his death-bed, when, to Mr. Woodnot, who took occasion to remind him of his rebuilding Layton church, and his many acts of mercy, he made answer, saying, "They be good works if they be sprinkled with the blood of Christ, and not otherwise." And Wesley's rebuke was just, as in the following anecdote.‡ For, we are told, that Dr. Hales, Rector of Killesandra in Ireland, happening to tell Mr. Wesley, that when Bishop Chevenix (of Waterford) in his old age was congratulated on recovering from a fever, the bishop replied, "I believe I am not long for this world. I have lost all relish for what formerly gave me pleasure; even my books no longer entertain me. There is nothing sticks by me but the recollection of what little good I may have done." One of Mr. Wesley's preachers, who was present, exclaimed at this, "Oh, the vain man, boasting of his good works!" Dr. Hales vindicated the good old bishop, and Mr. Wesley silenced the preacher by saying, "Yes, Dr. Hales is right, there is indeed great comfort in the calm remembrance of a life well spent." We are always reminded that an evil action will haunt the

* Carlyle, p. 289. † Life of Mr. Bowyer, p. 431.
‡ See vol. ii. of Southey's Life of Wesley.

death-bed of the sinner; and why should good actions, in all humility and in all subservience to the free mercy of God, be utterly cast out of remembrance at that awful season? To any disposed to cavil on this subject, or inconsiderately to raise differences *ore rotundo*, let us say in the words of our greatest dramatist,*

> "Noble friends,
> That which combined us was most great, and let not
> A leaner action rend us. What's amiss,
> May it be gently heard: when we debate
> Our trivial difference loud, we do commit
> Murder in healing wounds."

Great calmness in death has been the blessed privilege of an innumerable multitude of the members of the Church of England.† Some have been put in remembrance of a good

* Shakspeare.

† Read "Sacred Memorials of the Last Days and Blessed Deaths of Eminent Christians," &c. By the Rev. Henry Clissold, A.M. (Rivingtons). This book can not be too highly spoken of: it is *the* book of all modern books of a sacred character, that should be placed in the hands of every member of the Church of England, as a guide, counselor, comforter, and friend. The author's pious object, with the blessing of God, in compiling this book, must surely be successful—namely, 1st, For the use of the *thoughtless*, who, he hoped, as Addison did, might be deeply affected, and persuaded by such sights, when unmoved by abstract reasoning. 2dly, For the *timid* and *desponding* Christian, whose faith might be strengthened in learning how wonderfully others have been supported by the Holy Spirit in similar trials. 3dly, For the *sick*, who in these narratives might find much food for religious reflection, and many states of mind worth aiming at in the chamber of sickness.

The following letter is from the late Bishop Burgess, and addressed to a friend of the late Dr. Gaskin, Secretary to the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge:

"Dear Sir—Your account of the death of Dr. Gaskin shall be transcribed into one of the blank pages of Clissold's Last Hours of Eminent Christians, a most interesting work to a plusque-septuagenary, which has been, for some time, a part of our evening reading. It is a most valuable collection of practical divinity, taught and enforced by lessons of unaffected, undisguised, unequivocal instruction.

"Yours most sincerely,

"T. Sarum."

As often as we read this book, we may well praise and thank God for the grace it hath pleased Him to bestow on members of the Church of England; and let us hope, that the pages of this book will be largely replenished.

life past; others, which is better, have not made mention of the actions that adorned their useful career. The Rev. Dr. Aylmer was a pattern. "Let my people know," he said, "that their pastor died undaunted, and not afraid of death. I bless my God that I have no fear, no doubt, no reluctation, but an assured confidence in the sin-overcoming merits of Jesus Christ." And in the conclusion of all, *he shut his own eyes with his own hands*, dying in the Lord Jesus. "I long for death," exclaimed the Rev. Thomas Cole (1697), as a weary traveler doth for his rest; nothing troubles me but life, and nothing will relieve me but death: but let God do with me what He will: all He does is best;" and, after expressing full trust in his Redeemer, he concluded, "I long to be immortal: it is a mean thing to live a dying life."

Most edifying was the death-bed of Bishop Bull. "Doctor," he said to his physician, "you need not be afraid to tell me freely what your opinion of me is: for I thank my good God, I am not afraid to die; it is what I have expected long ago, and I hope I am not unprepared for it now." He disclaimed all notion of inherent righteousness, but put the matter clearly, in a few words, "I believe that while I bring forth fruits worthy of faith and repentance, and while I not only abstain from those crimes which, according to the Gospel, exclude a man from heaven, but do diligently, likewise, exercise myself in good works, both those of piety toward God, and those of charity toward my neighbor, so long I may preserve the grace that is given me of remission and justification; and that, *if I die in this state, I am in the way of obtaining it, by the mercy of God, and eternal life and salvation for the sake of Jesus Christ.*"

Yes, it is to the mercy of God that every man must look in a dying hour. We are told of Bishop Wilson, that "all his cry was for *mercy*:" of him, who like a full ear of corn, was bended down with his good works: of him who was an "epistle known and read of all men." (2 Cor. iii. 2.) And we are told* of a minister of eminent piety and distinguished usefulness, who, on being told on his death-bed by his surrounding friends, that he was going to receive his reward,

* Stowell's Life of Bishop Wilson, p. 254.

answered, "I am going to receive *mercy*." Dr. Johnson, on hearing of a criminal's prayer for mercy, said in a solemn, fervid tone, "I hope he *shall* find mercy." And let us hope that Dr. Johnson himself, the learned, the great, and the religious, has found that mercy with God which he desired so earnestly for an unfortunate fellow-creature. Surely, when we contemplate his last hours, we are not mistaken in putting into his mouth the lines of Sir Henry Wotton:

> "Now have I done; now are my thoughts at peace;
> And now my joys are stronger than my grief;
> I feel those comforts that shall never cease,
> Future in hope, but present in belief.
> Thy words are true, Thy promises are just,
> And Thou wilt find Thy dearly bought—in dust."

And now, gentle reader, we must come to a close. Adam Clarke, in speaking of a small town in the Land's End in Cornwall, tells us, that on the sign of an inn, as you come from the Land's End, are these words—"The first Inn in England;" and on the reverse are the following—"The last Inn in England." Reader! you will soon have come from first to last in this my book, wherein I trust you have not been wearily detained; at all events, let me hope that *your* duty hath pardoned any want of entertainment in *my* efforts; for, as has been said,* "Personal gratitude, and personal affection to the good and great who have closed their scene upon earth, are elevated sentiments. They are debts of honor to the departed spirit." But, reader, you will soon have passed from first to last in your mortal career: and while you derive, throughout your course on earth, much instruction from Dr. Johnson's life and writings, may you have a fair hope of the mercy of God in your entrance upon eternity!

Let me conclude with Dr. Johnson's own words. "There are few things," he writes in the *last* number of his IDLER,† "not purely evil, of which we can say, without some emotion of uneasiness, *this is the last.* Those who never could agree together, shed tears when mutual discontent has determined them to final separation: of a place which has been frequent-

* George Hardinge † Vol. ii. p. 281.

ly visited, though without pleasure, the *last look* is taken with heaviness of heart . . . . The termination of any period of life reminds us that life itself has likewise its termination : when we have done any thing for *the last time*, we involuntarily reflect that a part of the days allotted us is past, and that as more is past there is less remaining."

So is it with the author in writing a book—so is it with the reader in reading it ! And to all men there is a time when it must be said—*then cometh the end.*

THE END.

# Standard Works

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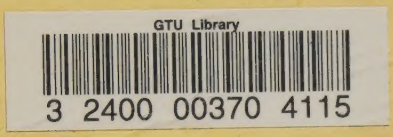


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